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Education of Pupils with Disabilities in Malawi's Inclusive Secondary Schools: Policy, Practice and Experiences

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis presented here is my own work. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

I declare that this work has not been previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university.

Elizabeth Tikondwe Kamchedzera

..... Date.....

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to God Almighty, the Maker of Heaven and Earth and all the children with disabilities.

ABSTRACT

Malawi is party to a number of international human-rights standards and frameworks that embrace the goals and values of inclusion and education for all. The country has therefore made promising start with inclusive education (IE) in basic education. The challenge now is to extend IE to secondary education and other levels of education. Located within the interpretative paradigm, this study aims to contribute toward knowledge development and transfer through the exploration of the extent to which IE policy initiatives in Malawi's secondary schools have appropriately responded to the context of practice and the experience of pupils with disabilities and their teachers. No study has been conducted at secondary school level to explore meanings given to and interpretations of the policy-to-practice contexts for Malawi.

This study employed Ball's (1994; 2009) policy-trajectory model as an analytical framework and tool for interrogating the policy-to-practice context of Malawian inclusive secondary schooling. The research design, methodology and research questions were structured according to this model. A mixed-methods approach, using both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods was adopted to fulfil the aims of the study. Evidence was collected from the contexts of influence through elite semi-structured interviews, text production through documentary analysis, and practice through teachers' questionnaires, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with pupils with disabilities.

The findings confirm the mismatch between the policy and practice, although there is much goodwill for inclusion to succeed in Malawi. Two critical issues that challenge inclusion in countries of the South such as Malawi still need to be addressed: how to make IE more effective for both pupils with disability and those without disabilities; and how to redistribute resources to ensure appropriate pre-service, in-service and specialist training for secondary teachers and adequate teaching and learning materials. With regard to both issues, responsiveness has to provide space for bottom-up initiatives in all the three broad contexts of influence, text production, and practice. Considering the historical imbalance in the resourcing of primary and secondary education in Malawi and the non-contestation of inclusion in the contexts of influence and practice, the conclusion is that IE policy that adequately responds to contexts of practice and achieves leverage on adequate resources can build on the existing goodwill of elites, teachers, and pupils to have effective IE in Malawi's secondary schools.

ABBREVIATIONS USED

CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DFES	Department for Education and Skills
DFEE	Department for Education and Employment
DPODP	Disabled People Organisation and Development Partners
EFA	Education For All
FEDOMA	Federation Disability Organisation of Malawi
GoM	Government of Malawi
HI	Hearing Impairment
ICIDH	International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicap
IE	Inclusive Education
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISFS	International Standards and Frameworks
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
JCE	Junior Certificate of Education
LD	Learning Disability
LEA	Local Education Authority
MACOHA	Malawi Council for the Handicapped
MANEB	Malawi National Examination Board
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEGDS	Malawi Economic Growth and Development Strategy
MEPIF	Malawi Education Policy Framework and Investment
MLD	Mild Learning Difficulties
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEVT	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
MPRSP	Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
MRPDE	Ministry Responsible for People with Disabilities and the Elderly
MSCE	Malawi Secondary Certificate of Education
MSDPD	Ministry of Social Development and People with Disabilities
NDP	National Disability Policy
NEFAP	National Education for All Policy
NESP	National Education Sector Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NLTPS	National Long Term Perspective Studies
NPEOPD	National Policy on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities
NSNEP	National Special Needs Education Policy
NSO	National Statistics Office
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPSI	Office of Public Sector Information
PHI	Profound Hearing Impairment
PVI	Profound Visual Impairment
SE	Special Education

SEN	Special Education Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinators
SNE	Special Needs Education
SREOPD	Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education and Scientific Culture Organisation
UPIAS	Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation
VI	Visual Impairment
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organisation

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 *Introduction*

Education is a process through which people and societies can reach their fullest potential. However, it is also one of the areas in which disability-related and other inequalities are manifested (UNESCO, 2001; Marks and Clapham, 2005; UN, 2006). In response to disability-related inequalities in education, inclusion has been a major policy initiative, designed to improve the educational opportunities of children with disabilities (UNESCO, 1994; UNESCO, 2001; Ainscow, 2005; Winter, 2006; Lindsay, 2007, Wright, 2010) in many countries, including Malawi.

Inclusion attempts to respond to pupils' diverse learning needs. It is driven by values which shape a country's political thought, such as social justice, and economic inequality (Thomas and Davies, 1999). It is located within a human-rights discourse (Avramidis and Norwich, 2004; Evans and Lunt, 2002). Inclusion reflects the basic human-rights principles of non-discrimination and participation (Avramidis and Norwich, 2004). Underpinning inclusion is the principle that children have the right to inclusive education (IE) and that it is a more effective education strategy than separation (UNESCO, 1994, paragraph 2:pg.ix; Lindsay, 2007). These values are at the core of the Salamanca Statement and Framework (UNESCO, 1994).

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994, Pg.ix) stipulates that "every

child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning”. It underlines that,

“regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system” (UNESCO, 1994: paragraph 2, Pg.ix).

The Salamanca Statement regards inclusive schools as effective. Such an assertion is appealing to governments. The argument partly explains the growing consensus among states on the importance of IE. Although IE is a key policy in several countries (Lindsay, 2007), including Malawi, it remains problematic to realize. Lindsay (2003) contends that the notion of inclusion in the Salamanca Statement does not sufficiently recognize the problems implied in its reference to ‘regular’ schools.

Although there has been a rapid and extensive emergence of inclusion studies (see Barton, 1998; Ainscow, 1999; Booth, 1999, 2000, 2005; Mittler, 2000; Armstrong, Armstrong, and Barton, 2000; Florian and Rouse, 2001), there are tensions, contradictions, and dilemmas relating to the required policies and practice (Armstrong et al, 2000; Vlachou, 2003). Peters (2004, p. 37) adds that “policy involves a struggle among stakeholders with competing objectives”. As argued by Lindsay (2003; 2007), inclusion is a complex and contested concept. More questions

on feasibility are raised when inclusion is applied in resource-poor countries, such as Malawi. The economic situation in the countries of the South like Malawi raises questions on whether the realisation of the child's right to education can be realised. Indeed, previous studies have noted that lack of resources is often given as a reason for problems in the education system in the countries of the South¹ (i.e. Eleweke and Rodda, 2002).

1.2 Background and context for the study

Malawi lies to the South of the Equator in South Eastern Africa. It has a land area of 118,000 square kilometres. It has an estimated population of 13,630,164 million, with an annual population growth rate estimated at 3.32% (National Statistics Office -NSO, 2008). The percentage of population under 15 is 47.1 (UNDP, 2008). It is estimated that 91% of the population live in rural areas (NSO, 2008). The context is that of poverty, with the country ranked 160 out of 182 countries on Human Development Index (UNDP, 2009).

Socio-economically, Malawi's rural areas are poorer than the urban areas, with poverty respectively at 66.5% and 54.9% (UNDP, 2008). The economy is predominantly agriculture-based. The country's social and economic development plans are supported mainly through donor aid, notably from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB).

¹ Note: The terms 'Countries of the North' and 'Countries of the South', rather than the terms 'economically developed' and 'economically developing countries' are used in this thesis. As explained by Peters (2003), this choice conforms to the trend in the literature. 'North' and 'South' in this thesis are therefore respectively used to describe the economically rich, industrialised countries and those countries that are not economically advanced (definition adopted from UNESCO Thematic Study, 2001: *Inclusion in Education: The Participation of Disabled Learners*).

1.2.1 Malawi and the socio-cultural and education context for pupils with disabilities

The general problems that may be caused by lack of resources may become greater in relation to pupils with disabilities. Booth's (2000) review of international developments since the 1990 Jomtien World Conference on EFA (UN, 1990) illuminated that children with disabilities continued to be the most excluded group from the education system. Research conducted by the Scandinavian Research Institute in 2006 in Namibia, Zimbabwe and Malawi on the Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities revealed that people with disabilities have lower educational levels and general standards of living than other people. However, since valid and reliable baseline data on children with disabilities is often unavailable, it is not easy to come up with exact figures (Habibi, 1999 and UN, 2007).

Nevertheless, it is possible to state that in general, globally, pupils with disabilities appear to face problems in realising the right to education. Of approximately 650 million persons with disabilities around the world in 2007, 200 million are children with disabilities of different types. Nearly 80% of these children lived in developing low-income countries (WHO, 2007) and many of whom experience problems realising their right to education.

Specifically, in regard to Malawi, though education has long been recognised as the catalyst for economic development (MoEVT, 2000), progress has been slow. The average literacy rate in the country is 64.1%, with that for males at 74.9%, whilst that for females is 54% in 2006 (UNDP, 2006:1). The estimated total secondary

school age (14-17 years) population at secondary school level was 1,149,120 million for both girls and boys. Of the 1,149,120 million, 567,653 (49.4%) were boys and 581,467 (50.6%) were girls (NSO, 2008). However, the data did not indicate the percentage of those with disabilities.

As pointed out by the Federation of Disability Organisation of Malawi -FEDOMA, (2004) and, Itimu and Kopetz (2008), the country lacks up-to-date nationwide figures on people with disabilities. The current statistics on education, nevertheless, illuminate discrepancies for pupils with disabilities. The findings from a six-district study in the three regions of Malawi by Ngwira, Kayambazinthu and Kamchedzera (2000) showed that only 19% of 2,264 school-going children with disabilities were in school, although the study focused on primary education. The 2002 National Education for All policy document revealed that of the school-going-age children with disabilities (0-15 years old), 66.2% had learning difficulties (LD), 20.5% had visual impairments (VI) and 13.3% had hearing impairments-HI (MoEVT, 2002). It is interesting to note that the percentages of children with LD, VI and HI were consistent with those reported in the 2004 FEDOMA representative study. The study indicated that enrolment in school-going-age children rose to 82.3% for other children, but by only 62.2% for children with disabilities (aged 0-15 years). Of these, 66.2% were with LD, 20.5% had VI and 13.3% had HI.

The 2004 Education Statistics revealed that of the 2,462 learners with disabilities in secondary schools, 52.4% were boys and 47.6% were girls. This indicates that there were more boys than girls in the schools. Of the 2,462 pupils with disabilities, 26.2% were learners with HI, 20.5% were learners with physical impairments (PI), and

53.3% were learners with VI (MoEVT, 2004). However, the data did not indicate the number of pupils with LD. The 2005 Education Statistics revealed that of the 2,711 pupils with disabilities in secondary schools, 53.5% were boys and 46.5% were girls. Of the 2,711 pupils with disabilities, 24.2% had HI, 20.6% had PI and 52.3% had VI (MoEVT, 2005). Again the data did not indicate the number of pupils with LD. The 2006 Education Statistics indicated that of the 3,645 pupils with disabilities enrolled in secondary schools, 50.5% were boys whilst 49.5% were girls. Of the 3,645 pupils with disabilities, 65.5% had VI, 20.3% had HI and 14.2 % had PI (MoEVT, 2006). These data too did not indicate the number of pupils with LD. The 2007 Education Statistics revealed that of the 4,680 learners with disabilities in secondary schools, 50.4% were boys whilst 49.6% were girls. Of the 4,680 pupils with disabilities, 52.7% had VI, 18.3% had HI, and 19.6% had LD whilst 9.4% had PI (MoEVT, 2007). The 2008 Education Statistics indicated that of the 5,414 pupils with disabilities in secondary schools, 49.6% were girls and 50.4% were boys. Of the 5,414 pupils with disabilities, 58.1% had VI, 9.3% had HI, and 19% had LD whilst 13.6% had PI (MoEVT, 2008). These data indicate increased access to education for pupils with disabilities, VI being the most common SEN in the secondary schools as summarised in Table 1.1. The data further revealed a gender inequity in the education of children with disabilities.

Table 1.1: The number of pupils with disabilities in secondary schools by disability

Year	Number of pupils with disabilities	Type of disability VI %	Type of disability HI %	Type of disability LD %	Type of disability PI %
2004	2462	53.3	26.2	-	20.5
2005	2711	52.3	24.2	-	20.6
2006	3645	65.5	20.3	-	14.2
2007	4680	52.7	18.3	19.6	9.4
2008	5414	58.1	9.3	19	13.6

1.2.2 History and disability-related disparities in Malawi's formal education

Where the rise of mass education accompanies the promotion of industrialisation by the state, missionaries introduced formal education in Malawi in the late 19th Century (Hauya, 1993). The University Mission to Central Africa (1862; 1885), the Livingstonia Mission of the Free Church of Scotland; Blantyre Mission of Established Church of Scotland (1875), the Zambezi Industrial Mission (1892), and the Roman Catholic Mission from 1902 were the pioneers. As Hauya (1993) has noted the common curriculum areas were reading, writing and rudimentary arithmetic. Each Mission though had its own educational philosophy (Hauya, 1993). Special needs education (SNE) was therefore not included in the inception of formal education in Malawi.

Referring to Hauya and Makuwira (1996), Kamchedzera (2008) has noted that the delivery of SNE in Malawi began in the 1950s through the initiatives of the

Evangelical Missionaries. Early SNE schools in Malawi catered for children with VI at Lulwe in Nsanje and Chiradzulu Districts (Southern Region of Malawi) and at Chilanga in Kasungu district (Central Region of Malawi). There was one more for children with HI in Chiradzulu District.

Kamchedzera (2008, p. 248) notes that Government initiatives in SNE came late, with the Ministry of Education (MoE) developing the first Education Plan (1972-1980) in 1972. This plan emphasised quality in primary and secondary education and access, relevance and equity at the tertiary level (MoE, 1972). A second Education Plan (1984-1994) was developed in 1984. As noted by Kamchedzera (2008, p. 248) with reference to MoE (1984), it underlined equitable distribution of educational services and materials, personnel and talent, elimination of repetition and drop outs, improvement of access, quality and equity, and production of top level man-power for government and the private sector. Both plans, however, did not mention SNE.

With reference to Ngosi (1997) and Msowoya (1999), Kamchedzera (2008, p. 248) has noted that the MoE established an LD programme only in 1996. Its purpose was to address intellectual disabilities, specific learning difficulties, behavioural and emotional difficulties, language and communication difficulties and, physical as well as related health impairments (Chavuta, 2006). The education of pupils with LD is, however, the most recent and the least developed category of SNE in the country.

The training of SNE teachers for pupils with HI and VI commenced concurrently with the introduction of schools for pupils with hearing and visual impairment, when the Government started supporting SNE (MoEST, 2005). The assistance was only in

terms of education, training of SNE teachers, and payment of teachers' salaries (Itimu and Kopetz, 2008). However, it is noteworthy that the training of SNE teachers focused only on primary education. This widened the gap between primary and secondary education in terms of initial teacher training in SNE.

The University of Malawi and Mzuzu University offer bachelor of education degrees for secondary school teachers. However, as the University of Malawi's curriculum for long did not have a component of SNE, student teachers were graduating without knowledge and skills of handling pupils with disabilities. Hence, the deployment of primary school SNE teachers in secondary schools. It was only in 2005 when an ad hoc SNE course was established to equip student teachers with such knowledge. This was in recognition that teacher training should prepare student teachers for a more inclusive reality in schools (Lambrechts and Geurts, 2009). Currently, the Catholic Fathers opened a Catholic University in 2006 which is offering a bachelor's degree in SNE for secondary school teachers.

1.2.3 Structural gaps in Malawi's education system

Pupils with disabilities are included in Malawi's present structure of formal education system, which follows an 8-4-4- pattern (8 years primary, 4 years secondary and 4 years university education). Promotion from one level to the next is based on national examinations. Pupils are offered a chance to repeat the year if they are not successful and this can lead to wide variation in age in any one class.

Since 1998, secondary education has been offered through conventional secondary schools and community day secondary schools. The schools are further categorized into 'boarding' and 'day schools'. The boarding and day secondary schools are either co-educational or single sex. The decisions about school allocations, with the exception of private schools, remains the responsibility of the MoE and will take into consideration the availability of secondary schools in rural areas particularly access for learners with disabilities and girls who may have to travel long distances unaccompanied by an adult and hence, are vulnerable. The list of secondary schools that include pupils with disabilities was collected from the Montfort Schools for the Blind, Deaf and LD. However, the data were not available at the time of the study to indicate the overall number of schools that include pupils with disabilities in the country.

Presently, there are still challenges in providing sufficient access to secondary schools for all pupils, with classes remaining high in some cases and a chronic lack of resources.

1.2.4 Justification for the study

As a party to international standards and frameworks (ISFs) that embrace human rights principles on non-discrimination, participation and valuing of diversity, Malawi has developed a policy of inclusion. As a result, there is an increased access to regular secondary schools for pupils with disabilities (MoEVT's 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, National Education Statistics-NES) as shown in Table 1.1 above.

However, despite Malawi's international commitment to realise the right to education for pupils with disabilities, the education of pupils with disabilities in Malawi's secondary schools has not been given due attention. No study has been conducted at secondary school level to explore inclusion policy-to-practice context issues and experiences of pupils with disabilities and their teachers. Literature on Malawi with regard to inclusive secondary education is also sparse. Yet, there is a need for research to inform policy-makers in the country. This study therefore contributes towards the knowledge generation and transfer through investigation and analysis of the policy-to-practice contexts and experiences of pupils with disabilities and their teachers in inclusive secondary schools.

1.3 An analytical framework for research questions

The thesis employs Ball's policy-trajectory model (Ball, 1994, Ball, 2009) as an analytical conceptual framework, in order to explore the policy-to-practice contexts. There is no universal agreement about social policy definitions and models. Baldock, Manning and Vickerstaff (2009) observe that policy concerns attempts to change the social order as a reaction to economic and social situations, for instance, related to wealth redistribution or issues of social inclusion. They suggest three aspects of policy-making: intentions and objectives about which there is a substantial disagreement; procedures to deliver (implement) policy; and outcomes, with winners and losers.

Ball's model has a similar structure and provided a useful means of analysing issues related to social exclusion and the distribution of economic resources. Devised at a

time when the English Education Reform Act (ERA) 1988 was introduced, its top-down policy implementation seemed as appropriate for the Malawian as the English context. Currently, Malawi is going through similarly extensive education reforms. Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) formulated a policy-trajectory model that underlined three contexts: contexts of influence, policy text production and practice. Later, Ball (1994) came up with two more contexts: contexts of outcomes and political action. The context of influence is where policy is initiated and discourses are constructed. In this context, the interested parties in and around political bodies, government, and legislative processes struggle to influence the definitions and purpose of education (Bowe et al, 1992). Various perspectives have a prominent role in this context. However, educationists, including teachers, are largely absent from this context (Bowe et al, 1992, Ball, 1994).

The context of policy text production is where texts related to the implementation of policy are constructed for use. The production of the formal and informal policy texts reflect a compromise of views, struggles, and influences of the policy-formulators and writers just like the arenas of influence represent competing views (Bowe et al, 1992).

The context of practice is where policy is re-interpreted and implemented by practitioners. In the context of the school, the actors involve teachers, head teachers, and other staff entrusted with the implementation of policy, as well as pupils and parents.

The contexts of outcomes and political action are incorporated in the contexts of practice and influence respectively (Ball, 2009). Ball explains that, to a large extent, outcomes are an extension of practice. He further explains that the context of political action belongs back in the context of influence. Ball concludes that the contexts can be ‘nested’ into each other.

This study aims to contribute to current scholarship by building on the debate that research in this area is essential to examine how and where, if at all, policy and practice increase inequality and impact unfairly on pupils with disabilities.

1.4 Thesis

The thesis therefore is that: IE policy that adequately responds to contexts of practice and achieves leverage on adequate resources can build on the existing goodwill of élites, teachers, and pupils to have effective IE in Malawi’s secondary schools.

1.5 Main and specific research questions

Ball’s model was used to structure the research questions for this study. The following open main research question indicates the exploratory nature of this study:

‘What is the policy-to-practice context for inclusion of pupils with disabilities in Malawi’s secondary schools?’

The more specific questions were:

- (i) To what extent have the international standards and frameworks influenced the policy of inclusion and practice in Malawi's secondary schools?
- (ii) How do schools (teachers and headteachers) implement the policy regarding the inclusion of pupils with disabilities in secondary schools?
- (iii) What are the experiences of teachers and pupils' with disabilities in inclusive secondary schools?
- (iv) What are the views of teachers tasked with the implementation of inclusion policy into practice at school level and the views of pupils with disabilities?
- (v) What are the barriers to learning and participation faced by pupils with disabilities and strategies that would help Malawi to enable pupils with disabilities reach their full potential in inclusive secondary schools?

It is noteworthy that the above specific questions had sub-questions as shown in appendix 3.

Questions (i), (ii), and (v) were addressed by collecting evidence from élites (policy decision-makers) using semi-structured interviews. Question (i) was further addressed by collecting evidence from the context of text production through documentary analysis. Questions (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) and (vi) were addressed by collecting evidence from the context of practice through teachers' questionnaire. Question (ii) was further addressed through four classroom observations. Questions

(iii), (iv) and (v) were addressed by collecting evidence from four observed pupils with disabilities through semi-structured interviews.

1.6 Organisation of the thesis

The thesis is structured in nine chapters, including this introduction. Chapter Two discusses the theoretical and analytical conceptual framework that informed this study, and identifies the gaps from the literature. Chapter Three is a discussion of the research design, methodology, data collection methods and data analysis process. It also considers the issues of reliability, validity, ethical considerations and the study's limitations. Chapters Four, Five, Six, Seven and Eight present and discuss the findings of the study. Chapter Four presents and discusses the findings from the élites' semi-structured interviews in the contexts of influence. Chapter Five presents and discusses findings from the documentary analysis in the context of text production. Chapters Six, Seven and Eight are closely interrelated. They present and discuss findings from the context of practice. Chapter Six presents and discusses findings from teachers' questionnaires. Chapter Seven presents and discusses findings from classroom observations. Chapter Eight presents and discusses findings from the semi-structured interviews with pupils with disabilities. Chapter Nine provides the conclusion of the thesis. The chapter draws together the emerging themes and issues from the different data sets and conclusion addresses the research questions. It also considers the implications of the findings for policy, methodology, scholarship, and practice particularly for the South and identifies the limitations of the study and suggests recommendations.

1.7 Conclusion

This study took a holistic social policy approach and explored the policy-to-practice context issues and the lived experiences of pupils with disabilities and their teachers in inclusive secondary schools. The aim was to illuminate an understanding of how policy is formulated, produced in text, and implemented in the context of practice, and the relationship among the three contexts. The main reason for this task was that both the historical and current situations of secondary school pupils with disabilities show discrepancies requiring investigation. In general, children with disabilities appear disadvantaged with regard to enrolment and attainment. The development of SNE in the country, further has much neglected secondary school education. This situation is despite Malawi's international commitment to realise the right to education for pupils with disabilities, with inclusion as the policy approach. It was an opportunity to interrogate policy issues of social exclusion that might entail redistribution of educational resources in the countries of the South.

Ball's trajectory model was chosen to explore how inclusion policy in Malawi has been developed, translated into text and implemented. The study therefore contributes to the scholarship and growing literature by applying Ball's policy trajectory model to a study conducted in a country of the South.

In Chapter Two, the model is discussed and used to analyse theoretical perspective and review the literature on disability and IE.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 *Introduction*

This chapter develops the study's conceptual, theoretical, and analytical framework, drawing from a range of literature and studies on disability, inclusive education (IE), and inclusion. The literature and studies are used to identify research gaps. In doing this, the chapter uses literature and studies from both the North and the South. The literature from the North is mainly used for comparison, to glean lessons and trends.

The chapter commences with definitional matters. It then employs Ball's policy-trajectory model, which offers a conceptual and analytical framework for exploring the policy-to-practice contexts and experiences. Secondly, it examines the models of disability and inclusive approach in the contexts of influence, policy text production and practice and considers the influence of international standards and frameworks (ISFs) on inclusion in the three contexts. Thirdly, it identifies the gaps and the main emerging issues from the key literature on the policy-to-practice contexts and experiences.

2.2 *Definitions of disability, SNE, inclusion and IE*

At the outset, it is useful to be clear about disability, SNE, inclusion and IE. According to the United Nations (UN) Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (SREOPD), "the term disability summarises a great number of different functional limitations occurring in any

population. People may be disabled by physical, intellectual, or sensory impairment, medical conditions or mental illness” (UN, 1993, Para. 17). Broadly, this definition captures the categories of disabilities covered in this study. In each category there are various types of disabilities. Table 2.1 below only gives the types of disabilities, used in this study, according to these broad categories.

Table 2.1: Categories of Disabilities

Some of the categories of Disabilities	Examples of Disabilities
Physical disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orthopaedic disability/physical impairment (PI)
Intellectual disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning difficulties (LD)
Sensory disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual impairment (VI) • Hearing impairment (HI)

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health which was adopted by WHO member states in 2001, defines disability as “the outcome or result of a complex relationship between an individual’s health condition and personal factors, and the external factors that represent the circumstances in which the individual lives” (WHO, 2001, p. 1). The definition recognises that every human being can experience deterioration in health and, as a result, can experience some degree of disability.

Table 2.2 provides examples of definitions of the types of disabilities:

Table 2.2: Types of disability and definitions

Type of Disability	Example of Definition
Visual Impairment (VI)	“a generic term that indicates visual disability that interferes with optimal learning and achievement, unless adaptations are made in the methods of presenting learning experiences, the nature of the materials used and or in the learning environment” (Barragos, 1976 cited in Winzor, 1990, p. 520).
Hearing Impairment (HI)	“A hearing disability that may range in severity from mild to profound” (Winzor, 1990, p. 520) and “affects educational performance” (Mertens and McLaughlin, 2004, p. 207).
Learning Difficulties (LD)	“This includes mild, moderate and severe learning difficulties” (Winzor, 1990) which affect educational performance.

Special needs education (SNE) is meant to respond to the education of all pupils with these disabilities. This thesis adopts the definition used in Malawi’s National Special Needs Education Policy-NSNEP (MoE, 2007). That policy describes SNE as: “The instruction and services designed to meet the unique learning needs of children who have sensory impairments, cognitive difficulties, socio-emotional difficulties, and physical and healthy impairments” (MoE, 2007, Section 1.1.3.2, p. 8). The thesis adopts this definition because it covers all the categories of SNE which are found in Malawi’s educational institutions. The definition understands learners with SNE as “learners who require special service provision and support in order to access education and maximise the learning process” (MoE, 2007, p.6).

There has been much debate on the meaning of inclusion making it a complex and contested concept (Mittler, 2000; Ainscow et al, 2000; Hegarty, 2002; Peters, 2003; Vlachou, 2004; MacBeath et al, 2006; Lindsay, 2007; Miles and Singal, 2009).

Clough (2000, p.6) contends that, “Inclusion is not a single movement; it is made up of many strong currents of belief, many different local struggles and a myriad forms of practice”.

Booth (1999, p.164) defines inclusion as “the process of increasing the participation of learners in and reducing their exclusion from the curricula, cultures and communities of neighbourhood mainstream centres of learning”. According to Abbott (2006, p.628), inclusion suggests “a transformation of schools to respond to pupil diversity”. Mittler (2000, p. 10) states that, “inclusion implies a radical reform of the school in terms of curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and grouping of pupils”. Such reform extends to the adoption of appropriate methodologies, as argued by Dyson and Forlin (1999), Mittler (2000), Farrell (2001, 2006), Angelides, Charalambous and Vrasides (2004) and Lloyd (2000). Others have argued that the reforms should extend to teacher training and the support they need to deliver IE. Teachers should have received and continue to receive appropriate preparation in initial teacher education (ITE) and continuing professional development (CPD) throughout their careers (Mittler, 2000). Lambrechts and Geurts (2009, p.1) add that, “in-service training must help teachers to acquire further skills in dealing with the new heterogeneity of class groups”.

The reforms have further to affect the environment in which education is delivered. Clough and Corbett (2000) and Corker (2000) add that physical factors within the existing schools need to change. In their study, Avramidis et al (2002) found that successful implementation of inclusion needs restructuring of the physical environment, resources, organisational changes and instructional adaptations.

The definitions of inclusion entail a process and strategy that is designed to increase the learning and participation of children with disabilities. To achieve the required results, there is a need to restructure the physical environment of the schools and resources. This will also lead to increased access for pupils with disabilities. In this regard, access refers to “physical access (school buildings), academic/program access (to curriculum and instruction through adaptations and support), social access (to peers) and economic access (to affordable schooling)” (Peters, 2004, p. 39). In addition, Tancing, Kavkler, and Puleclah (2005:1) underline the case for “an appropriate framework must be provided in order to guide the change effort so that schools would become inclusive for children with special needs.”

The definitions and description of IE can be categorised into three. The first category attempts to define IE as a strategy in the delivery of education. Table 2.3 gives examples of such definitions:

Table 2.3: Examples of definitions of IE

Author(s)	Definition of Inclusive Education
The U.S.A.’s National Centre on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion (NCERI, 1994, p.7)	“The provision of services to students with disabilities, including those with severe handicaps, in their neighbourhood school, in age-appropriate general education classes, with the necessary support services and supplementary aids (for the child and the teachers) both to assure the child’s success-academic, behavioural and social- and to prepare the child to participate as a full and contributing member of the society”.
Aubrey, Sutton and Aubrey (2004, p.1)	“The social inclusion agenda that arises from the full educational participation of children with special educational needs (SEN) and disability”.
Stubbs (2008, p.8)	“a wide range of strategies, activities and processes that seek to make a reality of the universal right to quality, relevant and appropriate education”

This table shows that even with a common agenda to define IE as a strategy, there are variations in emphasizing the elements of such a strategy. The U.S.A.'s National Centre on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion underlines equity, effectiveness, teaching support, and community-based delivery of education. For their part, Aubrey, Sutton and Aubrey (2004) underline the “full educational participation” of pupils in the delivery of education. Stubbs definition implies the need to include the importance of relevant methodologies in the delivery of such education.

The second category of descriptions involves attempts to portray it as a process to ensure the education of pupils with disabilities. Booth's (1999) view entails the need for reform in order to deliver real IE. In his words, IE:

“Is not just about including students with disabilities in mainstream classes and providing support so that they may fit into the regular system. It is rather about changing the system of education by providing support for the diversity of students irrespective of their background, first language, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, attainments or disabilities” (ibid, p. 164).

The theme of reform is further adopted by Clough (2000), who views IE as removing all barriers to learning and participation of all learners who are vulnerable to exclusion and marginalization. This view is shared by Ainscow (1999).

The third category of descriptions of IE includes views of inclusion as a discourse that constitute celebration of diversity as the rationale or justification for inclusion. These definitions perceive diversity as a cause for celebration and a rich resource for

teaching and learning, a view underlined by such scholars as Booth (n.d) and Benjamin, 2005). Mittler (2000, p.10), in addition, points out that IE is based on “a value system that welcomes and celebrates diversity arising from gender, nationality, race, language of origin, social background, level of educational achievement or disability”. This explanation underlines the importance of accepting differences among the people. In countries that underline the importance of community schools, this means that all pupils have the right to attend the neighbourhood school which is crucial for social reasons (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001). Mittler (2000, p.12) contends that “inclusion represents a change in mind-set and values for schools and for society as a whole”. This is so because “the underlying philosophy is one of catering for and celebrating diversity” (ibid). Similarly, Lipsky and Gartner (1999) add that the difference among pupils in inclusive schools is a positive characteristic for those schools. It is an example of an inclusive approach to development (Miles, 1999). As stated by Kunc (1992 cited in Lipsky and Gartner, 1999, p.20), “valuing diversity is the fundamental principle of IE because everyone has a contribution to offer to the world”.

The fourth type of explanation of IE is about attempts to contextualise the meaning of IE. Dei (2005, p.3) defines IE in a Ghanaian context as “education that responds to the concerns, aspiration and interests of a diverse body politic, and draws on the accumulated knowledge, creativity and resourcefulness of local people”.

In Malawi, the National Special Needs Education Policy-NSNEP (MoE, 2007, p.6) views IE as “a learning environment that provides access, accommodates, and supports all learners”.

However, Peters' (2003, p.1) detailed analysis of international research on policy and practice regarding IE revealed that IE is a complex matter and that there is no evidence of a coherent approach in the literature. She also reported that not only is IE implemented at different levels, but it also embraces various goals on a range of varied motives and reflects different classifications of SEN and varied service provision in different contexts. IE also requires the collaboration of teachers and the adaptation of the general curriculum to enable all pupils to benefit from it (Lipsky and Gartner, 1999).

In view of such variety of descriptions of IE, the General Report of the 48th Session of the International Conference on Education highlighted that “inclusive education is a theme that requires more specific definition and direction by the countries so that its actions give expression to the political will of member states of UNESCO (UNESCO, 2008, para:2, p.17).

Nevertheless, the description of IE by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (UN, 2006) summarises the key notions in these four perspectives. In 2006, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child described IE as:

“a set of values, principles and practices that seeks meaningful, effective, and quality education for all students, that does justice to the diversity of learning conditions and requirements not only of children with disabilities but for all students” (UN Committee on the Right of the Child, 2006, p. 1)

This description underlines both the ideology (values and principles) and practices. It also entails reform in practice to ensure effective learning and fairness.

2.3 *Inclusive Education Problematised*

For both countries of the North and the South, however, inclusion is widely accepted in principle by policy-makers, with references to the Salamanca Statement and the right to education (UNESCO, 1994, Dyson, 1999). In the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), IE has long been understood to justify the need for inclusion on the basis of ensuring the realisation of the right to education for all and in a manner that is effective and efficient. Dyson (1999) points out that the support for IE on the basis of the right to education is often accompanied by an argument about efficacy in the delivery of education. It is often argued that IE is cost-effective (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001). Observations by scholars such as Florian and Rouse (2001, p.134) stress that, IE aims to improve the learning outcomes for pupils with disabilities who otherwise would be educated separately. Hence, such supporters of IE stress that it is one effective and efficient way of realising the right to education for pupils with disabilities.

The advantage of viewing inclusion as a right is that no group of pupils can be denied this right (Clarke et al, 1997; Tutt, 2007). It also means that although the questions of feasibility, effectiveness and efficiency may be real and crucial, they cannot be allowed to over-ride the rights of pupils to education (Clarke, et al, 1997). However, Lindsay (2003) argues that if inclusion is accepted as human right regardless of its effectiveness, then it is possible that various views and

understandings of social and human-rights are likely to create conflict in the implementation of policy and practice.

Lindsay's (2007) review of research on the subject indicates a gap between the need to comply with human rights principles and the evidence of effective and efficient delivery of education. Much as compliance with human-rights principles is accepted as imperative, putting into practice such principles in a manner that is efficient, effective, and sustainable is not as clear. May (n.d) cited in Byers (2005, p.2), for example, examines literature and concludes that there is a danger of over-professionalizing pupil participation in a quest to comply with the human rights principle of participation at the expense of effective teaching. Tutt (2007) has argued that there is an assumption in inclusion that if some children with SNE can succeed in mainstream schools, then everyone can. If this is true, supporters of inclusion would be accused of promoting IE without necessarily uplifting the dignity of pupils with disabilities as they learn in inclusive schools. Such unclear symmetry between inclusion as a human rights imperative and the delivery of IE in a manner that satisfactorily reflects human rights principles and ensures effectiveness and efficiency is reflected in both theoretical expositions and empirical studies.

It is no wonder, therefore, that there is a strong view that the IE approach appears to lack indications of how to realise its ideals in practice. Pather (2007, p.267) argues that the notion of inclusion has been "problematised over and over again". Clough and Corbett (2002, p.6) maintain that "the argument of absolute inclusion has yet to be won, let alone realised in practice". Lloyd (2000) argues that as long as the organisation of the school, the curriculum, and assessment procedures is not

challenged, equal educational opportunity will remain a myth. Moreover, it should be remembered that IE itself is a contested concept as disability crosses health, education, social welfare and employment sectors that, as noted by Peters (2004, p.6) may be “implemented at different levels, be based on different motives, reflect different classification of SNE and provide services in different contexts”. It is therefore important to consider not only the macro-level of national and internal policy context but also the meso-level of specialist support services and the micro-level of schools that allow for complex interactions among student and school characteristics, processes of teaching and learning that lead to specific personal, social and academic outcomes (Peters, 2004).

It has been questioned whether inclusion can actually improve equal access to education for all learners (ibid). Forlin (1999) contends that while the rights of the child with disabilities were significant in the decisions to proceed towards IE, it appears that the rights of the mainstream class child and the teachers’ rights have not been defined clearly. For their part, Booth and Swann (1987) argue that inclusion may pose a challenge in the classroom, if the needs of the pupils are not met with regard to teaching methods and the curriculum. They further observe that inclusion is even worse if there are so many pupils in the mainstream classroom. This poses additional challenges to teachers because it is demanding and tiring for them to provide the pupils with disabilities the necessary level of attention and assistance. Bennett and Cass (1989) contend that mainstream schools might not be able to meet the educational and emotional condition of those pupils with greater educational support needs. Avramidis et al (2002, p.146) summarise the problem regarding the difference between the ideals and practice of inclusion in the following terms:

“developing more inclusive schools is not a simple task and the process might be more complicated than theorising and research in the field had originally assumed”.

In addition, there has been a growing body of literature emerging from South Africa in more recent years that argue that debates on inclusion and IE should go beyond the focus on disability and SNE issues. The literature points out that the disability issues must be placed alongside all forms of oppression within the frameworks of human rights (Muthukrishna, 2008). It is noteworthy that IE is context-specific (Stubbs, 2008, p.37). However, Pather (2008) states that both countries of the North and South are in some way trying to conceptualise and implement inclusive policy and practice. This is despite that for the countries of the South, national agendas are usually based on borrowed notions of, as well as strategies for, inclusion.

McBride (2009) adds that in the countries of the South, there are similar problems regarding the definition of inclusion. The term appears to have different meanings to different people who have different investments, or vested interests in how these are constructed and interpreted. It is hence questionable whether IE is practical, particularly in countries of the South which have few resources and many challenges. Realising IE in Malawi’s secondary schools, accordingly, cannot ignore these challenges. However, Wright (2010, p. 153) points out, “inclusive education is now established as part of a global agenda and as such national governments, and their agencies, strive to produce and implement policies to promote inclusion”.

2.4 *The policy-trajectory model, theory and inclusion*

According to Ball (1994, p. 10), policy is “both text and action, words and deeds, it is what is enacted as well as what is intended”. In Ball’s model policies are viewed as representations which are encoded in complex ways through struggles, compromises, authoritative public interpretation and re-interpretations (Ball, 1994). Policies are also decoded in complex ways through actors’ interpretations and meanings in relation to their history, experiences, skills, resources, and contexts (Ball, 1994). Ball (2009) elaborates that the policy circle is a way of thinking about policy as well as how policy is formulated utilising some key notions that vary from the traditional conceptions, like, for instance, the concept of enactment.

Bowe et al (1992) attempted to give structure to Ball’s policy- trajectory model by proposing three primary contexts. These are the contexts of influence, text production, and practice. Later, in 1994, Ball added two more contexts: contexts of outcomes and political action, as noted above.

Ball’s policy trajectory helps analyse the problems regarding the mismatch between inclusion concept and practice. Ball underlines the interrelationship between the contexts of influence, text production, practice, contexts of outcome and political action. According to Ball, each context involves its own public and private struggles and compromises. In addition, each context interacts with the others. In this connection, the contexts are “loosely coupled and there is no one simple direction of flow of information between them” (Ball, 1994, p.26). Various other writers have endorsed this point (Ozga, 2000; Rose, 2003; Tilsone and Rose, 2003; Osgood, 2004). In such process, policy is contested and changed (Bowe, et al, 1992; Ball, 1994).

The context of influence is where policy is initiated and discourses are constructed (Ball, 1994). The participants in the context of influence include ‘power élites’ (Hatcher, 1994, p.9). According to Ball, this is policy as a discourse. In the context of influence, the interested parties in and around political bodies, government, and legislative processes struggle to influence the definition as well as social intentions of education. Ball (1994) argues that real struggles over the interpretation and enactment of policies are eminent. Levine et al (2003, p.2) argue that education reforms are often a battlefield of ideologies. Jansen (1998, p.232) argues that policy in the context of influence is driven in the first instance by political imperatives which have little to do with the realities of classroom life. In this sense, the nature of the context of influence may be idealistic or unresponsive. The formulation of education policies therefore needs to be deliberately intended to respond to actual and potential realities.

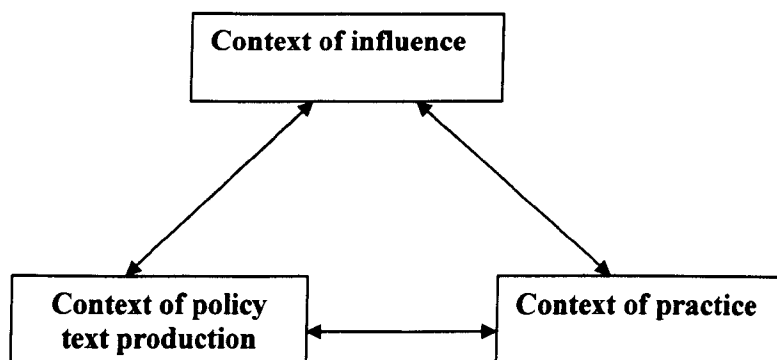
The context of policy text production is where texts related to the implementation of policy are produced for use. Policy texts are a representation of policy (Bowe et al, 1992). As stated by Ball (1994, p.16), policy as texts, are the products of compromises at different stages, such as, “at points of initial influence, in the micro-politics of legislative formulation, in the parliamentary process and in the politics and micro-politics of interest groups”. In this case, it is important to recognise that the policies (texts) themselves “are not necessarily clear or closed or completed” (Ball, 1994, p.16). They are represented and interpreted in various ways by different actors and interests (Bowe, et al, 1992; Ball, 1994, p.17).

According to Ball (1994) the production of text depends on commitment, understanding, capacity, resources, practical limitations, cooperation, and inter-textual compatibility. The contestation and interpretation of policy during the production of text entails the need for prudence against vested interests and poor knowledge and lack of technical capacities. Bowe et al (1992, p.21) caution that, “The ensembles and the individual texts are not necessarily internally coherent or clear”. Thus, the texts can often be contradictory as they use key terms differently and are reactive and expository. The representation of policy changes in response to events, circumstances and feedback from the contexts of practice.

The context of practice is where policy is re-interpreted and re-created (Bowe et al, 1992), applied, or ignored by practitioners. Ball (2009) reiterated that this is where policy is enacted. In the context of the school, these practitioners are teachers, head teachers, and other staff entrusted with the implementation of policy into practice. Such practitioners do not confront policy texts as naïve readers because they also have vested interests in the meaning of policy. Vidovich (2001) adds that teachers are policy-makers because they actively engage in both the construction and interpretation of policy in their schools as well as classrooms. Thus, as underlined by Bowe et al (1992), practitioners at school level interpret the policy in relation to their own understanding, experiences, histories, desires, values, purposes, means, and preferred way of working. This is a reason why interpretation of the policy is a matter of struggle (Peters 2003). A key conceptual argument in this study is that the degree of propriety in responding to such struggles by the contexts of influence and policy text production determines the success of inclusion in secondary school education.

Figure 2.1 below summarises Ball's policy-trajectory model as structured by Bowe et al (1992).

Figure 2.1: A summary of Ball's policy-trajectory model



Adapted from Bowe et al (1992, p.20)

The contexts of outcomes and political action are incorporated in the contexts of practice and influence respectively (Ball, 2009). He explains that to a large extent, outcomes are an extension of practice. According to Ball, there are first-order outcomes which emerge from attempts to alter the teachers' actions or behaviour so as to change practice. The second-order outcomes are actualised within the context of practice, especially those related to performance or achievement and other types of learning.

He further explains that the context of political action belongs back in the context of influence. This is so because it is part of the circle of the process whereby policy is changed or may be changed or at least the thinking of the policy is changed or may be changed. Thus policy thinking as well as policy discourse can be changed by

political action. In this case the context of political action has to be incorporated back into the context of influence.

Ball concludes that the contexts can be ‘nested’ into each other. For instance, as he elaborates, within the context of practice one could have a context of influence as well as a context of text production. In the same vein, he explains that there could be a context of text production within the context of practice as practical materials are produced which are for use within enactment.

Although Ball’s model has not been widely applied as a tool for analysis regarding education research on policy formulation and implementation, this study finds it useful because the model can help interrogate the mismatches between intentions and policy, on the one hand, and reality, on the other hand. The model is further useful because it highlights that the contexts are or should be interrelated, influenced and benefiting from each other.

2.4.1 The influence of models of disability and ISFs on inclusion

In the light of Ball’s trajectory model, it is possible to regard models of disability and ISFs as sources of influence. As sources of influence, these models and ISFs have impacted the contexts of influence, text production and practice at the country level.

The context of influence

This section discusses the influence of the models of disability and ISFs in the context of influence.

(a) The continuing influence of the medical model of disability

The so-called medical model of disability dominated the understanding of disability for the most part of the 20th Century (Drake, 1999; Priestly, 2003; Hargrass, 2005). The model defines disability in terms of individual deficits (Shakespeare, 2006). It views disability as a problem or a measurable defect located in the individual that requires a cure or eradication by medical experts (Gill, 1999 cited in Mertens and McLaughlin, 2005, p. 2; Priestly, 2003; Vlachou, 2004).

This view of disability assumes that medical and rehabilitative interventions are the only means to resolve disability and that the person with disability must strive to achieve normality (Hargrass, 2005). The model views the causes of disability as coming from the functional limitations or psychological losses (Vlachou, 2004). Underpinning these two points, as argued by Oliver (1990, p.3, 2004, p.19, 2006, p.8) and Hargrass (1998), is what might be called the ‘personal tragedy theory of disability’. Corker and Shakespeare (2002, p.2) contend that the medical model views and categorises disability in terms of “a meta-narrative of deviance, lack and tragedy and assumed it to be logically separate from and inferior to normalcy”.

The medical model has influenced the context of influence by its representation of ‘normalcy’ and insistence of ‘lack of ability.’ This is evident in the World Health Organisation’s (WHO, 1980) definitions of impairment and disability (Corker and

Shakespeare, 2002). The WHO (1980, p.50) defined impairment as “any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological, or anatomical structure or function” and disability as “any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being” (WHO, 1980, p.143).

As observed by Bury (2000), Pfeiffer (2000) and Miles (2001), many critics argue that the international classification of functioning also represents the medical model of thinking. This is so because of its emphasis on ‘normalcy’ and ‘lack of ability’. Hargrass (2005, p.151) argues that the meaning of normalcy seems to be shaped by an individualistic medical perspective of biological functioning and limitations. Significantly, there is therefore no reference to any environmental, cultural, or social influences on the process of disablement. Albert (2005) adds that the perspective begins with the individual, instead of the society and attempts to find a compromise between the two ways of understanding disability. However, Fujira and Rutkowski-Kmitta (2001) argue that the WHO’s international classification of impairments, disabilities and handicap (ICIDH) (WHO, 1980) and the revision of ICIDH-2 (WHO, 1990), was an effort to internally standardise disability conceptualisations and improve the precision of data collection on disability.

Miles (1999) contends that the medical model’s definition of disability influenced the conceptualisation of people with disabilities as different. This resulted in policies that emphasised differences and signified specialised solutions instead of promoting inclusion. In spite of a lot of evidence that this approach is counter-productive to

efforts towards inclusion, it continues to influence policy practices (Leicester and Lovell, 1997; Vlachou, 1997; Barton, 2000).

In countries of the South, such as Bangladesh (Momin, 2005) and Malawi (Msowoya, 1999a) the medical model has resulted in governments viewing disability as a medical problem. The impact of the model is evident in Malawi. In Malawi, the definition of persons with disabilities includes,

“any person who, by reason of any impairment of the mind, senses or body, congenital, or acquired, is unable to participate fully in regular education, occupation and recreation, or who, by reason of such impairment, requires special assistance or training to enable him/her to participate in regular, mainstream or inclusive education, occupation or recreation and other spheres of life” (Ministry of Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly, 2006, p. vii).

Thus, within the government of Malawi, disability is officially viewed as impairment.

(b) The increasing influence of the social model of disability

The deficiencies of the medical model are clear when juxtaposed with the social model of disability. The social model of disability originated from the experiences of people with disabilities who challenged the medical model (Swain and French, 2000; Corker and Shakesphere, 2002; Hurst, 2005; Hargrass, 2005; Shakesphere, 2006). At its core, is the separation of impairment and disability (Race, Boxal and Carson,

2005; Shakespeare, 2006). It is a concerted shift from the insistence on individual impairments as the cause of disability to the way in which physical, cultural and social environments exclude or disadvantage people with disabilities (Barnes, 2001, p.3). The model therefore re-locates disability from the individual to society's response to disability (Oliver, 1984, 1990; Seelman, 2000; Priestly, 2003; 2005; Bolt, 2005; Race et al, 2005; Shakespeare, 2006). As pointed out by UNESCO (2001), the social model of disability shifts attention from 'personal tragedy' of the individual to the way in which the social environment within which people with disabilities have to live acts to exclude them from full participation. The idea underpinning the social model of disability therefore is that of externally-imposed restrictions (Oliver, 2004, p.19).

The gradual re-definition of disability by people with disabilities, not as personal challenge or tragedy but rather as social oppression, has made a politics of disability possible (Oliver, 1984; 2004; 2006). The argument is that disability is a social construct (Soder, 1992, p.248; Wendell, 1996, p.35; Miles, 1999, p.11; Mertens and McLaughlin, 2004, p.2). As such, its definition varies across countries and across cultures (Barton and Armstrong, 2001). As stated by Barton and Armstrong (2001, p.695) and Mertens and McLaughlin (2004), different societies construct disability in their own specific cultural ways, expressing their particular dominant social norms and practices. Apple (2001) observes that the social model of disability takes into account the external factors in terms of the social, political and ideological mechanisms as well as systems that may activate and uphold disability. Disability is therefore "a social problem caused by social processes" (Priestly, 2003, p.13). The social construction of disability leads to restrictions on certain groups such as people

with disabilities, which deny them equal opportunity in all areas of life (Miles, 1999). As a result, it can only exist within a social environment that does not value difference (Woodham and Daniel, 2000).

Oliver (1996) argues that disability is everything that enforces restrictions on people with disabilities. This includes individual bias and institutional discrimination. Further, the results of this failure do not simply and randomly fall on individuals. They systematically fall upon people with disabilities as a group who experience this failure as discrimination institutionalised throughout society (Oliver, 1996, p.33). Thus Priestly (2003, p.11) notes that the Union of Physically Impaired against Segregation contends that disability is enforced on top of people's impairments.

The social model of disability has impacted on the context of influence at both international and national levels. The model has also been the major influence for the growing politicisation of a large number of people with disabilities across the world (Barnes, 2001). It has provided people with disabilities with an effective tool with which to bring to the attention of policy and decision-makers the limitations of traditional medically-inspired thinking on disability (Hargrass, 2005). The model, for instance, influenced policy-making within the European Union. A Disabled People's Parliament held in 1993 marked the first European Day of Disabled People (Priestly, 2005). The resolution passed by the European Parliament, acknowledged that people with disabilities have equal shares in universal human-rights. At national level, for example, France's 1999 Disability Action Plan intended to widen participation of children with disabilities and young persons in ordinary education settings. This provided a forum for debate and the development of policy (Armstrong, 2005). The

Finnish Government, for another example, in 1996 made a formal decision in principle to include the status of people with disabilities as a concern in the context of poverty reduction and human-rights (Stakes, 2003). In England, the social model provided a framework for a structural analysis of people with disabilities' social exclusion (Hasler, 1993) at policy level.

In Malawi, the social model of disability influenced a change on policy towards viewing disability as a cross-cutting and human-rights issue (MoE, 2006, 2007). As a cross-cutting issue, disability cuts across all sectors such as education, economics, and gender among others. As a human right issue, the policy advocates the right to education for children with disabilities.

(c) The interactional perspective and the need to recognise 'within' factors

Much as the social model helps expose the deficiencies of the medical model, it is liable to criticism for neglecting the interaction between social factors and individual attributes. This has in part led to an interactional perspective to disability. Interactionists regard "the level of need as the result of a complex interaction between the child's strength and weaknesses, the level of support available and the appropriateness of the education being provided" (Fredrickson and Cline, 2002, p.42). An official IE document in England and Wales puts it in these terms: "A child's SNE are thus related both to the nature and extent of the interaction of these with his or her environment" (Department of Education and Employment, 1989a, para.17).

There has recently been a noticeable support for this view. In addition, it is increasingly accepted that neither individually nor environmentally focused conceptualizations are adequate on their own (ibid). Fredrickson and Cline (2002) have noted that this approach appears to have been adopted in the United Kingdom (UK). Fredrickson and Cline (2002) argue that in spite of the fact that an interactive approach is widely supported in the UK, “it cannot be assumed that it is widely implemented in practice” (p. 42).

Despite such shortcomings, it is appropriate to recognise the ‘within-child’ factors (Lindsay, 2003) as important in their interaction with teaching and learning. Indeed, learning outcomes may be a result of interaction between environmental and the learner’s ‘within’ factors. The perspective, however, is yet to be well-known, let alone used in countries of the South such as Malawi.

(d) The aspired global influence of ISFs

The notions of the social model and inclusion have long been used at the international level by activists, policy-makers, and academics to formulate standards intended to influence approaches and the delivery of education for pupils with disabilities. Consequently, a number of ISFs that promote inclusion have been signed and ratified by many countries in the world including Malawi.

(i) General binding international human rights standards as a bedrock

Drawing on Article 26 of the United Nation's (UN) 1948 Declaration of Human rights, there have been ISFs whose effect has been to promote inclusion as a value, an end, and a strategy. With the exception of Article 23 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child- CRC (UN, 1986), standards intended to be binding had, until 2006, been general on education and inclusion. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human rights itself underlined that all human beings are born equal in dignity. Among other entitlements in life, education was declared a human right (UN, 1948). Parents were also accorded with the responsibility for the education and guidance of their children. In 1966, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights specifically set standards on secondary education. Article 13 (1) of the Covenant states:

“Secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational secondary education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education” (UN, 1966, Article 13, para.1).

In 1986, building on the 1959 Declaration on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of the Child -CRC (UN, 1986), currently ratified by all but two countries (the United States of America-USA and Somalia) enshrined the rights of children with disabilities.

Notably the CRC underlines the importance of participation, a principle of the Convention, for children with disabilities (Wyness, 2009). Article 23 in effect prescribes the followin

- A mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the children's active participation in the community.
- Those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs.
- Education system should be designed and educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics.

Article 23 (3) stipulates that assistance from States should be:

“free of charge, whenever possible, taking into account financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child, and shall be designed to ensure that the child with disability has effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation of opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his/her cultural and spiritual development”.

This requirement does not clarify the situations when it would not be possible for the state to render such assistance. Stubbs (2008) contends that the CRC is weak in the sense that it makes the rights of children with disabilities subject to available resources and focuses on SNE without defining those needs. Nevertheless, as Hodgkin and Newell (2002) comment, the inclusion in the CRC of a specific Article on the rights of children with disabilities and inclusion of disability as a specific

ground for protection against discrimination under Article 2 reflects a growing understanding as well as acknowledgement of the links between disability and human rights. Such standards further help set goals that can be achieved at the country level and against which States can be held accountable. In addition, such internationally binding standards, though general in nature, provide bedrock for more specific standards on IE for children with disabilities and holders of human rights.

(i) Growing and Refined Consensus on and Non-binding ISFs

Since the adoption of the CRC, there have been formulations of ISFs specifically on the education of pupils with disabilities. Indeed, a year after the adoption of the CRC, the Jomtien World Conference agreed on Education for All (EFA) in 1990. Although heavily on basic education and not exclusively specific on the education of people with disabilities, the EFA underlined the tenet that children with disabilities need to be included in accessing and benefiting from education facilities (Daniel and Singh, 2003). This was a reflection of two earlier Declarations, specifically on people with disabilities, though not exclusively on education. The first was the UN's Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons which had proclaimed in 1975 that people with disabilities had the same civil and political rights as all other human beings. This led to the proclamation of International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981 which advocated full participation and equality (Hogkin and Newell, 2002; Albrecht et al, 2007). The second, seven years later, in 1982 was the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons which resulted in the International Year of Disabled Persons. The Declaration, in part, underlined the need for inclusion in education. It declared that education should be provided within the

ordinary school system as much as possible and without discrimination. Furthermore, Asian Decades of Disabled Persons (1993-2002; 2003-2010) and the African Decade of Disabled Persons (2001-2010) were launched by the UN regional offices.

A significant attempt to have global standards on the education of pupils with disabilities was achieved in 1993. The thrust of the Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (SREOPD) was equalisation for the benefit of people with disabilities. It was a serious and more poignant attempt to underline that opportunities must be equalised for everybody. It is the first detailed instrument which reaffirms the rights of people with disabilities (Hodgkin and Newell, 2002).

As a source of international influence, the SREOPD (UN, 1993) underlines EFA. It poses specific policy, pedagogical and practice challenges. Specifically on education, Rule 6 requires States to recognise the principle of equal primary, secondary, and tertiary educational opportunities for persons with disabilities in integrated settings. The education of pupils with disabilities should be an integral part of the national educational planning, curriculum development and school organisation (UN, 1993, Rule 6, Para.1, p.12). To achieve this, the Rule requires States:

- (a) to provide interpreter and other appropriate support services designed to meet the needs of persons with different disabilities (Rule 6, Para. 2).
- (b) to involve parents groups and organisations of persons with disabilities in the education process at all levels (Rule 6, Para.3).

(c) where education is compulsory, to provide education to girls and boys with all kinds and all levels of disabilities, including the most severe (Rule 6, Para. 4).

On the other hand, in order to accommodate educational provisions for persons with disabilities in the mainstream, Rule 6, Para. 6, requires States to have the following:

- A clearly stated policy understood and accepted at the school level as well as by the wider community.
- Allowance for curriculum flexibility, addition and adaptation.
- Provision of quality materials, on-going teacher training and support to teachers.

In addition, Rule 6, Para. 9, requires States to make provision for the particular communication needs of persons with HI and those with the combination of HI and VI. Again, Rule 6 paragraph 22 recognises the fact that special schools may have to be considered where ordinary schools have not been able to make adequate provisions.

A year after the adoption of SREOPD, a significant conference on SNE produced the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action, Policy and Practice on SNE (UNESCO, 1994). It has been a powerful influence at national and international level for advocating change through IE (Ainscow, 2005; Singal, 2005). As observed by Stubbs (2008), the right to IE was first stipulated in the Salamanca Statement and

Framework. It emphasised that schools need to change and adapt. The Salamanca Statement stipulates the following principles:

- Every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning.
- Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities, and learning needs.
- Educational systems should be designed, and educational programmes implemented, to take into account the wide variety of these characteristics and needs.
- Those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools, which should accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs.

According to UNESCO (2001, p.20), the Salamanca Statement indicates that the move towards IE is justified on three types of grounds. The first is an educational justification: that schools need to educate all pupils together by developing ways of teaching that are responsive to the diverse needs of all pupils. The second justification is social: that inclusive schools are capable of changing attitudes to difference by educating all pupils together. This in turn, forms the basis for a just and non-discriminatory society. The third justification is economic: that it is likely to be less costly to establish and maintain schools which educate all pupils together rather than setting up different types of special schools for different types of pupils. Armstrong, Lynch and Severin (2005), highlight that the World Bank which provides loans to the countries of the South, has argued in favour of inclusion. That the argument is that:

“If segregated special education is to be provided for all children with special education needs, the cost will be enormous and prohibitive for all developing countries. If integrated in-class position with a support teacher system is envisaged for the vast majority of children with special education needs, then the additional costs can be marginal, if not negligible” (Lynch, 1994 cited in Armstrong et al, 2005, p.74).

The Salamanca Statement and Framework (UNESCO, 1994) further urges States to make certain responses. The first is to give the highest policy and budgetary priority to improving their education systems to enable them to include all children regardless of individual differences or difficulties. The second is to adopt, as a matter of law or policy, the principle of IE, and enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise. The third is to develop demonstration projects and encourage exchanges with countries having experiences with inclusive schools. The fourth is to establish decentralised and participatory mechanisms for planning, monitoring and evaluating educational provision for children and adults with SNE. The fifth is to encourage and facilitate the participation of parents, communities and organisations of persons with disabilities in the planning and decision-making process concerning the provision for SNE. The sixth is to invest greater effort in early identification and intervention strategies, as well as in vocational aspects of IE. The seventh is to ensure that, in the context of a systemic change, teacher education programmes, both pre-service and in-service, address the provision of SNE in inclusive schools.

Although both the SREOPD and the Salamanca Statement exemplify growing and refined consensus, they have three major weaknesses. First, as agreed by the international community, the two instruments were not meant to be binding. Their likely degree of influence therefore was, from inception, either weak or dependent on the good-will of States. Mittler (2005) argues that even though the initiatives associated with SREOPD and the Salamanca Statement have for the most part been beneficial as well as productive, the fact that they are not legally binding and that governments are therefore not held internationally accountable, has weakened their impact. Second, the two instruments reflect lack of questioning as Hartas (2005) does, whether regular schools are the most effective environments for IE. Third, from the perspective of Ball's model, the two instruments do not reflect insight on the interface between policy influence and policy text production. In addition, although the Salamanca Statement has been a source of national influence, the expressed ideals have been diluted or mitigated by inadequacy or lack of appropriate skills and teaching and learning resources in the context of practice.

Thus, mainly due to these inadequacies, when the World Education Forum met in Dakar in 2000 to review the progress towards EFA, an observation made during the Jomtien Conference a decade before was repeated: that marginalised people continued to be excluded in many countries (Stubbs, 2008). Stubbs (2008, p.128) notes though that the Dakar forum had "catalysed a stronger focus on developing solid National plans of Action and regional strategies for implementation and monitoring." However, Stubbs (2008) argues that the Dakar forum conducted and evaluated by the international and national political as well as technocratic élites without participation or information from the context of practice.

(ii) The willingness to be bound and ISFs on the rights of persons with disabilities

The non-binding nature of the SREOPD and the Salamanca Statement entailed, for the disability movement, continued work for binding disability-specific and dedicated standards. A milestone in such a quest came in December, 2006, with the UN adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006). Malawi is a party to this Convention. As a Convention, it is a binding international law instrument that makes States accountable at the international level. Amongst its core thrust is a State obligation to ensure IE. The guiding principles in the Convention (Article 3) are as follows:

- Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons;
- Non-discrimination;
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
- Equality between men and women; and
- Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities.

Although the Convention does not define IE or an IE system, it is a useful source for the tenets for an inclusive school education system. Five tenets of IE can be identified from Article 24(2). First, the educational system must not exclude persons with disabilities. This entails that an IE system must facilitate equal access to its

services. Second, the secondary education accessed must not only be free and inclusive, but also characterised by acceptable quality. An IE system must therefore provide free quality education. Third, the system must reasonably accommodate the individual's requirements. This means that an inclusive secondary school education must be learner-responsive. Fourth, the system must provide support for effective education. Fifth, not only must the support be effective and individualised, but it must be provided in an environment that maximises academic and social development. This entails that an inclusive secondary school education must be characterised by a conducive learning environment.

One major shortcoming of previous international instruments had been lack of guidelines on the delivery of education within the school setting. In response, the 2006 Convention draws on practices and means that had worked in developing life and social development skills for pupils with disabilities. In particular, Article 24 (3 and 4) underlines the following:

- Learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills;
- Peer support and mentoring;
- Learning of sign language;
- Promoting the linguistic identity of the deaf community;
- Delivery of education for the blind, deaf, and deaf-blind in the most appropriate languages and environments and modes and means for the individual;

- Employment of teachers and staff, including those with disabilities, qualified in Braille and other specialist techniques; and
- Training of appropriate teachers and staff.

Thus there are now at an international level, a set of practices that are known to have worked in the delivery of IE.

The Convention sets a much more detailed and practical agenda than a simple statement of a right to education without discrimination (Innes, 2007, p.87). However, debates are likely to continue on five issues. First, the use of terms such as ‘quality’, ‘effective support’, and ‘conducive environment’ may result in discrepancies across countries, as interpretation vary according to context and knowledge. For example, it will still not be easily possible that pupils with disabilities in countries of the South will enjoy the same quality of education as those in countries of the North. Second, it is still not addressed in the framework whether IE is the best approach for fair attainments for both pupils with disabilities and those without such disabilities. Similarly, Innes (2007) argues that the list of measures included in Article 24 does not amount to a comprehensive statement of how to deliver IE. Third, although the framework may lead to the reform of regular schools, there is a failure to consider whether a different type of school may be appropriate. Fourth, the Convention does not reflect a clear guidance in the interface between policy and practice. Fifth, the Convention does not set standards or targets on the allocation of resources, which is one of the greatest constraints against IE.

There is evidence that ISFs have impacted on the national contexts of influence. They have played a great role in stimulating educational change (Dyson, 1999; Dyson and Forlin, 1999; Singal, 2005). Mittler (2000) observes that the Salamanca Statement and Framework has influenced the formulation of policies and strategies that support movements towards IE in the countries of both the North and South. Governments have been influenced to establish ways of enabling schools to serve all children (UNESCO, 2001), irrespective of their diverse needs. As a result, there has been an increasing impetus worldwide towards ‘full inclusion’ (UNESCO, 2001, Evans and Lunt, 2002). For instance, in the countries of the South, ISFs on IE are reflected in the EFA agenda (UNESCO, 2001). ISFs form a set of resources on which Governments can draw in defining their philosophical positions (UNESCO, 2001) regarding IE. The inclusive approach therefore “reflects a move from a deficit model of adjustment towards systemic change” (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001, p.306).

However, as Ball’s (1994) model indicates, ideals such as those expressed in the 2006 Convention diminish in their effect through the various national contexts of influence, text production, and to practice. This is ironic because international human rights standards are meant to be minimum requirements in international law

Context of policy text production

The ISFs and the models of disability have also influenced developments in the context of text production in Malawi and other countries.

(i) The medical model and policy texts focusing on the individual

The medicalisation and individualisation of disability advocated in the medical model of disability resulted in policy texts that focused almost exclusively on the individual instead of the economic, environmental and cultural problems faced by people with disabilities in all sectors of life (Oliver, 1990; Lunt and Thomas 1994). Vlachou (2004) adds that the medical discourses informed educational policies that are blatantly discriminatory. For example, in England, the Education Act 1944 (Department of Education and Science-DES, 1944) reflected the principles that underpin the medical model of disability. Its focus was on the 'disability of body or mind' with limited consideration of other factors external to the individual (Hartas, 2005). However, the Act has long been superseded by other Education Acts including the recent 2006 Education and Inspection Act (DES, 2006), which is not based on the medical model.

In Malawi, the principles that underpin the medical model of disability are reflected in the Malawi Handicapped Persons' Act, 1972 (GoM, 1972). As argued by Msowoya (1999), the Act is more medical, charity-oriented in nature instead of being developmental and human rights-oriented. The Act reinforces individual deficits, which leads to a discriminatory approach. The Act also does not guarantee support to those children with less obvious disabilities and does not advocate for inclusion.

(i) The wide-spread moral influence of the social model

The influence of the social model on the context of text production has been widespread. Barnes (1999, p.5) observes that the “developments have had an increasingly important influence on social policy at both the national and international levels”. Low (2001 cited in Lindsay, 2003, p.6) states that the social model has influenced policy formulation, especially in developing legislation based on ‘rights’ arguments.

This indicates that the social model has had an impact on the development of social policy at both levels. Hence many countries and certain regional groupings of states have got some form of anti-discrimination legislation to protect people with disabilities from unequal treatment (Oliver and Barnes, 1998). For example, Article 13 of the amended Amsterdam Treaty of 1997 empowered the European Council to take action to combat discrimination on the basis of disability. The inclusion of disability in this general clause conveyed a new competence to the European Community, allowing it to address disability discrimination. However, although such legal recognition of disability discrimination has been a landmark achievement, the extent to which it represents progress in implementing the social model is questionable (Priestly, 2005).

In Malawi, the social model influenced the production of policy texts too. For example, in the policy texts such as National Disability Policy (MRPDE, 2001), National Special Needs Education Policy (MoEVT, 2007), National Policy on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (MRPDE, 2006), disability is viewed as a cross-cutting issue. Thus, it crosses health, education, social welfare and employment sectors. Like elsewhere, the shortage of documented

evidence to illustrate the practical positive impact of the social model raises the question whether its acceptance in Malawi is not largely based on its moral force, since it underlines the values of non-discrimination and celebrating diversity.

(ii) Lack of evidence of the interactive perspective in Malawi

There is also emerging evidence of the influence of the interactive approach in the context of text production. So far, such evidence relates to countries in the North. Fredrickson and Cline (2002, p.42) note that in England and Wales, a document entitled 'Assessment and Statements of SEN: Procedures within the Education, Health and Social Services' (Department of Education and Employment-DFEE, 1989a, para.17) reflect this approach. In part, that document notes that, "The extent to which a learning difficulty hinders a child's development does not depend solely on the nature and severity of that difficulty." It notes that other "significant factors include the personal resources and attributes of the child as well as the help and support provided at home and the provision made by the school" and others. Similarly, the Code of Practice on Identification and Assessment of SEN highlights that, "It should be recognised that some difficulties in learning may be caused or exacerbated by the school's learning environment or adult/child relationships" (DFES, 2001, Para 5.6).

In Malawi, no literature was found to establish the influence of the interactive approach in the context of text production. This is probably because the model is relatively new and not as well understood as the medical and social models.

(iii) The influence of ISFs at the text production level

IE has become central to national education policies of many countries (UNESCO, 2001; Ainscow, 2005; Winter, 2006) of the North and South. Evans and Lunt (2002) state that all European countries now have legislation firmly in place to promote or require IE. England provides an elaborate example. There, the context of text production includes the 1981, 1993 and 2002 Education Acts (DFES), the Education Reform Act (DFEE, 1988) and a Code of Practice (DFEE, 1994; DFES, 2001). These texts reflect the values and goals of inclusion and IE.

Countries of the South have also been influenced by ISFs on IE. For example, in South Africa, an Education White Paper 6, (Government of RSA, 2001), within the framework of an Education Act and Constitution characterised by the principle of non-discrimination, required the education system to be responsive to the needs of all pupils. In addition, the South African 2005 Curriculum requires an assessment that is responsive to disability (UNESCO, 2002). For its part, Zambia developed disability-responsive curricula and learning materials to encompass IE (Dawson, Hollins, Mukongolwa & Witchalls, 2003). In Uganda, a Government White Paper on Education (Ministry of Education and Science, 1992) makes a recommendation that units and annexes for children with disabilities should be attached to mainstream schools. The Namibian Broad Curriculum incorporates compensatory teaching to help learners with mild learning difficulties in the mainstream class, within a subject, by the class/subject teacher (UNESCO, 2002). In Botswana, the 2007 National Policy on Education (Botswana Federation of Trade Unions-BFTU, 2007) includes issues of IE.

In Malawi, certain policies have explicitly referred to the influence of ISFs as one reason for their formulation. Such policies are Vision 2020 (Government of Malawi-GoM, 1998-1999); National Policy on Disability (MoE, 2001); Malawi Education Policy Investment Framework-EPIF (MoE, 2005b); and the National SNE Policy-NSNEP (MoE, 2007). In particular, the National Policy on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (MRPDE, 2006) was adopted to give effect to the goals and values of the UN Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (UN, 1993). These are analysed in Chapter Five.

Despite the increasing evidence that countries are adopting IE in their policy and other texts, the extent to which the countries have re-visited principles of IE to re-conceptualise their policy and practice in the education sector differs greatly (UNESCO, 2002). Tilstone (2003) argues that action has not necessarily followed policies and much still remains to be done. Evans and Lunt (2002, p.2) argue that “the contradictions inherent in the current policy context make full inclusion problematic and impose limits which it is important to recognise and to plan for”. For example, there is urgent need in Southern Africa for effective policy articulation and mechanisms for the participation of all learners (UNESCO, 2002).

Influences in the context of practice

There is further evidence that the models of disability and ISFs have influenced the context of practice in the implementation of IE policies.

(i) The still potent influence of the medical model

The influence of the medical model in the context of practice, like in other contexts, is evident. Hargrass (2005) has noted that people with disabilities have in many countries been treated as victims in need of pity, sympathy and charity. One practical result has been the establishment of special schools for children with disabilities (Oliver, 1996) in both countries of the North and South. This approach places emphasis on “getting the child ready for school, rather than getting the school ready to serve an increasingly diverse range of children” (Swadener and Lubeck, 1995 cited in Mertens and McLaughlin, 2004:2). Mittler (n.d) argues that integration is based on a medical model whose aim is to identify deficits in order to try to remedy them.

From the perspective of Ball’s trajectory model, the medical model does not take into consideration the interface between policy, text and practice. The observation from the literature has been that the model is incapable of explaining discrepancies between policy and practice except in so far as these are assumed to be irrelevant to medical conditions.

In Malawi, the medical model has historically influenced the establishment of special schools for pupils with VI, HI and LD as discussed in Chapter One. It remains a major influence because the social model, the interactive approach, and ISFs are less known in the context of practice, as it will emerge in Chapters 4 and 6.

(ii) The mismatch regarding the goals of the social model in the context of practice

The literature indicates that the social model has increasingly replaced the medical model in its influence in the context of practice, as it has done in the contexts of influence and text production. In the context of education, as observed by UNESCO (2001) the social model influenced the notion of inclusive classrooms. The social model of disability has resulted in attempts to have pupils with disabilities learn in mainstream schools. This has also been the case in Malawi.

However, from the perspective of Ball's model and as argued by Booth (2000), the social model's practical implications for understanding difficulties experienced by learners in education have not been explored that much, especially with regard to the context of practice.

Although the literature in Malawi reflects awareness of the social model, there is very little in the literature to demonstrate that the model is as practically successful as it is well accepted.

(iii) The nascent influence of the interactive model

In a sense, the interactionist model merges useful aspects of the social model and the medical model and aims at effectiveness in the delivery of education. It is, however, an emerging model and its influence is still nascent. Fredrickson and Cline (2002) argue that in spite of the fact that an interactive model is widely supported in the UK,

“it cannot be assumed that it is widely implemented in practice” (p. 42), let alone in Malawi.

(iv) The context of practice, contradictions, and ISFs

The influence of ISFs in the context of practice has been characterised by contradictions. This is not surprising because as Ball’s (1994) model indicates, the contestations and contradictions that start at the policy level continue during text production and are played out through to the context of practice.

In countries of the South, such contradictions have existed because some useful tools to assist effective practice are yet to be employed. An example of such a tool is the Index for Inclusion (Booth et al, 2000), developed by research consultants in England and widely taken up both within schools in England and in many other countries (Booth et al, 2000 and Ainscow et al, 2006). The Index includes five phases. Phase One involves setting up a co-ordinating group, raising school awareness about the index, exploring the knowledge of the group, preparing to use indicators and questions and, preparing to work with other groups (half a term). Phase Two is about finding out about the school (one term) exploring the knowledge of staff and governors, students, parents/carers and members of local communities, and deciding priorities for development. Phase Three is the production of an inclusive school development plan (half a term) putting the Index and priorities into the school development plan. Phase Four is the implementation of the developments (ongoing). This involves putting priorities into practice, sustaining development and, recording progress. Phase Five is the review of the Index process (ongoing),

evaluating and reviewing developments; work with the Index and, continuation of the Index process (Booth et al, 2000).

Boban and Hinz (2005, p.1) have noted that this tool “can increase the individual schools’ ability to reach a better quality, to work better together, to think and to do more systematically school development, to empower the role of students, and be a democratic school for all”. There are, however, few studies to indicate the use of this tool in countries of the South. Engelbrecht, Oswald and Forlin (2006) used it in three primary schools in Western Cape Province to assist in development of inclusive schools in South Africa.

Such tools do not eliminate all difficulties in the implementation of IE. For example, Booth and Swann (1987) underline difficulties, especially if there are so many pupils in the mainstream classroom. This poses additional challenges to teachers because it is cumbersome for them to provide pupils with disabilities with the necessary level of attention and assistance (ibid). Tutt (2007) observed that mainstream schools have encountered the challenges of being asked to take on pupils with needs that are outside their experience. As a result, schools have had to explore ways of making sure that they adapt to provide for such pupils just as well as they do to the rest of the pupils (ibid). Nevertheless, such tools if designed or adapted for a particular context can help minimise difficulties in the context of practice, such as those prevailing in Malawi.

2.5 Key Findings and Gaps from the Literature Review

There has been valuable literature reviewed and studies identified pertaining to the contexts of influence, text production, and practice.

2.5.1 The Context of Influence: Interest in ISFs

Studies on the context of influence have tended to predominantly focus on ISFs. These have included the reports issued, prominently, by UNESCO (2001, 2002), about the responses of countries to ISFs. Often noted is the point that the standards have lacked a strong enforcement mechanism. For instance, the UN 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' monitored and enforced through country reports to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which can only issue recommendations. Also often noted is difficulty to implement such standards at the country level and in developing context-specific strategies to implement the standards (Rieser, 2008). This is so because the development of IE needs a massive programme of change in order to develop each country's education system at all levels (ibid).

Although much has been written on the impact of ISFs in the context of influence, the evaluation of the implementation progress of the UN 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is yet to be done. So far, response to this Convention has involved critical acclaim or scepticism about the convention. For example, Rieser (2008, p.11) contends that children and young people with disabilities "will only be fully included in the mainstream system if there is a change in hearts and minds".

Scholars such as Oliver (1996); Priestly (2003) and Vlachou (2004) have been critical of the medical model because it views disability as a problem or measurable defect located in the individual that requires a cure or eradication by medical experts. The literature has generally been in favour of the social model in comparison with the medical model. This is so because it reflects a concerted shift from the insistence on individual impairments as the cause of disability to recognition of the way in which physical, cultural and social environments exclude or disadvantage people with disabilities (Barnes, 2001). However, there has been frustration with little evidence about its success. There has been relatively less attention devoted to the interactionist model that recognises disability not as a static property but a dynamic process varying over time and according to situation. Its emphasis on the learner's characteristics as well as the social environment is a proper response to criticisms of the social model as made by scholars such as Lindsay (2003).

Pertinent for this study, not many of these major strands in the literature on the countries of the South have focused on IE for secondary school education. This is one of the gaps for this study to address.

2.5.2 The Context of text production

Literature and studies concerning the context of text production have noted the growing adoption of broad definitions of IE (UNESCO, 2001 and 2002). Broad definitions of IE are noted to have been adopted in South Africa (DoE, 2001) and Malawi (Chavuta, 2006, Mukhula, 2006, Soko, 2006; MoE, 2007; MRPDE, 2007).

However, Stubbs (2008, p.35) cautions, “there is a danger that UN perspectives, documents and initiatives can dominate and be accepted uncritically”.

Despite the adoption of definitions of IE that do not just focus on SNE, the policy texts fail to meet the diverse needs of learners in the context of practice. Curricula are often not able to meet the diverse needs of learners (UNESCO 2000). Booth’s (2000) review of developments in the theory, policy and practice of IE indicated that inappropriate curricula remain a widespread and the main cause of students’ absenteeism, failure and drop-out. In addition, for many learners, the language of instruction is not usually adapted to meet the learning needs of pupils with disabilities (UNESCO, 2002) or even the pupils’ home language.

However, studies regarding the context of text production have not revealed the contestations and conflicts in the context of text production which should explain many of the barriers, according to Ball’s trajectory model. This is another gap that this study seeks to address.

2.5.3 The context of practice

The majority of empirical studies on IE have been the context of practice, compared with the contexts of influence and text production. Predominantly, the studies have highlighted the discrepancies between policy intentions and practice. In mirroring such discrepancies, much focus has been on teaching strategies (pedagogy), the impact of inclusion on teachers and pupils with disabilities, attitudes towards

disability and inclusion and barriers or constraints to inclusion, learning, and participation.

Firstly, with regard to **pedagogy**, a survey conducted by Florian and Rouse (2001) among 268 teachers in five English schools with a long standing commitment to inclusive practice revealed variations in the effectiveness of strategies used among teachers who were skilled in whole-class teaching and able to offer a choice of tasks and different expectations for different pupils. The differences depended on the nature and status of knowledge in a particular domain. Florian and Rouse (2001) further report that what enabled such teachers to include pupils with a wide range of learning abilities seemed to be the way they embedded responsiveness to individual needs within the process of whole-class teaching. In contrast, some studies have established that a single instructional method is not effective for all learners (Florian, 2001; Florian and Rouse (2001). Udvari-Solner (1996 cited in Carrington and Elkins, 2002, p.52) argues that learners' opportunities for meaningful participation in class activities are enhanced if there is multi-level instruction and choices in materials. Similarly, Pather's (2007) study in a South African school reported that teachers planned whole-class activities and were supported, where necessary. Studies have further shown that the effectiveness of inclusive practices varies. Hegarty's (2001) studies of IE found the following as successful strategies: meaningful individual plans, effective use of support staff, clear roles among professionals, procedures for evaluating effectiveness, collaborative team work, a shared framework, family involvement and, general educator ownership. Although the compilation of such practices provides a potential useful resource, Hartas (2005) urges caution in

measuring effectiveness, as multiple and complex factors of pupils' diverse characteristics and the learning environment need to be considered and understood.

Lewis and Norwich's (2005) extensive review and critique of research into teaching approaches used with pupils with diverse forms of disabilities, deals with the controversial issue of whether there are particular teaching approaches that suit children with particular learning needs. Many still consider IE as an inappropriate strategy for pupils with severe/profound SEN (Evans and Lunt, 2002, Tutt, 2007). However, with regard to pupils with HI, the Salamanca Statement/Framework (UNESCO, 1994, para. 21, p. 18) and Gregory (2005) emphasises the importance of the use of sign language as the medium of instruction. Apart from ordinary teachers, Okwaput (2001) suggests that all children should receive training in sign language so as to promote social inclusion and positive school climate. The Salamanca Statement/Framework (UNESCO, 1994, para. 21, p. 18) further recognises the particular needs of deaf/deaf and blind pupils, and those with severe and profound learning needs and suggests that their education can best be provided in special schools, special classes and units in mainstream stream schools. In terms of pedagogy for those with MLD, Fletcher-Campbell (2005, p. 188) states that "there are calls for more intensive and deliberate teaching for this group".

Douglas and McLinden (2005, p. 37) highlight the following pedagogical strategies for pupils with VI: the need for learning experiences to be more deliberate; the need for structured teaching for certain tasks and the modification of the modality of presentation. This confirms that such pupils may need a special pedagogy for them to reach their full potential in inclusive secondary schools.

Nevertheless, Lewis and Norwich (2005, p. 213) conclude that, with regard to pedagogy, there was a scarcity of a researched evidence base about pedagogic strategies for different special needs areas.

Secondly, regarding **the impact of inclusion** on teachers, the key finding has been that despite that most teachers welcome IE (Booth, 1996; Peters, 2003; Boys, 2005; and Zoniou-Sideri and Vlachou, 2006), it increases teachers' workload. In their study on the cost of inclusion in English schools, MacBeath et al (2006) observed that inexperienced teachers and inadequately trained teachers found it difficult to deliver IE. The study reports that huge demands are placed on teachers who lack proper training and this increases the teachers' workload. The study also found that despite the introduction of guaranteed non-contact time, teachers lacked sufficient time to prepare materials suitable for SNE children. Boys (2005, p. 66) found that most teachers were apprehensive that IE would increase their workloads. Similarly, Zoniou-Sideri and Vlachou's (2006) study of Greek teachers' belief systems about disability and IE revealed that 69.8% of the sampled teachers (641) reported increased workload.

Thirdly, **the evidence on the impact on IE on pupils** has been that although pupils appreciate IE, experiences have been mixed. In England, certain studies have established that where the learning pace has been fast, many pupils with disabilities have been bewildered (MacBeath et al 2006 and; Flutter and Rudduck, 2004). This is also true for non-disabled peers.

Otherwise, fourthly, on “key factor in successful inclusive education” (Lindsay, 2007), **attitudes on inclusion and disability**, the literature generally indicates considerable evidence that although teachers in mainstream schools hold positive attitudes towards the general philosophy of inclusion (Avramidis and Norwich, 2004; Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden, 2002), there are still reservations about the feasibility of IE. An ironic fact is that, the studies have tended to establish that it is teachers who do not participate in the delivery of IE that are more resistant and prejudiced against pupils with disabilities (Norwich, 2004) than those delivering IE. There are studies such as Mittler (2002) and Evans and Lunt (2002) that have revealed continuing general prejudices and stereotypes against pupils with disabilities, with most people under-estimating the abilities of pupils with disabilities. In England, where inclusion is regarded as relatively well-established, studies have shown that many teachers considered that IE was suitable only for certain types and degrees of disability. Lindsay (2007) contends that despite the identification of a general shift to a more positive attitude to inclusion, there is lack of evidence of acceptance of a policy of total inclusion. Similarly, Cherono (n.d.) reported poor attitudes towards SNE by service providers as one of the challenges facing SNE in Kenya.

Fifthly, such negative attitudes by teachers and service providers seem to be explicable by **inadequacy or lack of training**. There is agreement in the studies that proper teacher training is essential for the delivery of IE (Avramidis et al, 2002). Peters’ (2004) work, which placed training as a top priority, was a review of the studies on IE carried out by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) between 1998 and 1999 in North America, Europe and the

Pacific, a point also underlined by Ainscow (2005). Mittler (2000) highlights that training is the best investment that can be made in ensuring that newly qualified teachers have a basic understanding of inclusive teaching. Rieser (2008, p. 46) concludes that teacher education and on-going development is very crucial because teachers “are the most valuable resource in promotion of inclusive practice.”

Studies on teachers’ perceptions about their inadequacies have shown that teachers in England and Northern Ireland thought that they received inadequate initial training on IE (Florian and Rouse, 2001; Avramidis, 2002; Winter, 2006, MacBeath et al, 2006; Peters, 2003). Lewis and Norwich (2005) adds that it is sometimes argued that mainstream teachers do not have the necessary skills for teaching children with specific or complex difficulties. Similarly, in the countries of the South, Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001) and Eleweke and Rodda (2002) found that lack of initial teacher training was a major cause of failure to deliver IE at classroom context. In his study, Naicker (2008) reported that educators were not adequately prepared for IE and 85% of the educators had no training to teach learners with SEN in South African secondary schools. Praveena’s (2008) study revealed one of the challenges impeding the process of IE was untrained educators in South African secondary schools. In Malawi, Chavuta (2006) observes that Malawi does not have a formal SNE teacher education at secondary school level. As a result, certified primary school specialist teachers support pupils with disabilities in inclusive secondary schools.

Another explanation for difficulties among teachers and, sixthly, relates to **poor provision of staff and peer support** in the delivery of IE, according to the

literature. Despite the requirement in ISFs for effective and individualized support, studies have predominantly shown that such support is lacking (Galt, 1997 cited in Winzer, 1999, p. 103). Where support has been provided, it has been mostly casual and inadequate (Farrell, 1997; Sebba and Sachdev, 1997 cited in Mittler, 2000, p.124). Peer tutoring as a means of support had been found satisfactory in Hong Kong (Mittler, 1998); China (Mittler, 2000), and some Western countries (Mittler, 2000). Galt (1997 cited in Winzor, 1999, p.103) argues that the best intentions are being challenged by lack of support for mainstream classroom teachers in many countries. Similarly, in the countries of the South, Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001) reported lack of support in some South African mainstream schools which enrolled pupils with disabilities. This meant that teachers in mainstream schools had to cope with pupils' diverse learning needs without support. In their study of the schools in the countries of the South, Eleweke and Rodda (2002) and Naicker (2008) reported lack of support. Abosi (1996) and Eleweke and Rodda (2002) have confirmed that peer tutoring as a means of support and some specialist support is mostly lacking in the countries of the South.

In looking at special support, there is a great role that special schools can play which is to support the mainstream secondary schools in order to promote IE. The Salamanca Statement and Framework (UNESCO, 1994) asserts that support to mainstream schools could be provided by the outreach staff of special schools. This should be utilized increasingly as resource centres for mainstream schools offering direct support to those children with SNE (Para. 50, p. 31). Special schools should also provide an element of profession development within a framework which can be defined by the governments (ibid). Tilstone, Florian and Rose (1998) argue that

special schools will unlikely disappear completely although they should be going through rapid changes. This is so because they will continue to be needed for certain groups of pupils like those with severe/profound learning difficulties who cannot be included full-time in the mainstream schools.

Seventhly, the studies have affirmed the **importance of a friendly learning environment**, which, unfortunately, has often been found to be inadequate. Wolfensohn's (2002) study of inclusion in English secondary schools reported that the learning environment was often unfriendly to pupils with disabilities. Stakes and Hornby (1996; 2000); Engelbrecht et al (1999); Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001); Wolfensohn (2002); and Peters (2003, 2004) have all stressed the same point. Similarly, Francis' and Muthukrishna's (2004) study of inclusion in South African secondary schools reported that some schools' learning environments were so unfriendly that it was not easy to deliver IE. The finding corroborates studies by Eleweke and Rodda (2002), UN (2007) and Shah (2007).

Eighthly, several studies have attempted to address the **feasibility of IE in the countries of the South, despite general positive responsiveness of such countries**. Mba (1995) notes that meeting the needs of learners with disabilities is deemed too costly, a point somewhat also pointed out by Chavuta (2006), Mukhula (2006) and Soko (2006) in Malawi. Praveena's (2008) study revealed that insufficient funding was one of the challenges impeding the progress of IE in South African secondary schools. Lack of teaching, learning and economic resources is the key barrier in this regard (Stubbs, 2008). UNESCO (2002) points to some examples in this regard. Citing Botswana, UNESCO noted that the problem of scarce resources was partly

addressed through increased budgetary allocation particularly to non-governmental organisations providing or supporting IE, with the establishment of resource centres as an innovative strategy. Such centres have also been established in South Africa (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001). Peters' (2004) report of the study on the feasibility of introducing IE in Botswana by Save the Children in ten pilot schools in Lesotho highlighted furthermore barriers such as contradictory policies and lack of guidelines on implementation.

However, the continued problem of massive poverty in South Africa, particularly in the rural context, remains as a central challenge to the implementation of IE in this context. However, a 2008 UNESCO's general report of the 48th International Conference on Education (ICE) highlights that there was an agreement among the African Ministers in Education that the world economic crisis cannot be taken as an excuse to cut back on investment in education. Stubbs (2009) has reported that practitioners agreed at a meeting that it is still possible to deliver IE irrespective of class size and material resources. It appears that addressing this challenge is a gap in the literature to which this study can make some contribution.

Ball (2009) highlights that the enactment of policy is not difficult if the school is well resourced with plenty of money, teachers who are very experienced and students who are very cooperative but difficult for the one where there are students with tremendous learning difficulties, poor resources, bad buildings, and teachers without experience. He further reiterates that education policies in particular, are thought out and then produced in relation to the best of all possible schools with little acknowledgement of differences in context, resources or in local capabilities.

Commendable though the studies in the context of practice have been, a further gap in the literatures has been **absence or little voice for pupils with disabilities and teachers**. There are studies that agree that the voices of teachers and headteachers, and pupils can inform the design and delivery of IE (Bowe et al, 1992; Ball, 1994; Dyson et al, 2002; Jones, 2005; Sheehy et al, 2005; Stakes and Hornby, 1996, 2000; Winter, 2006). The importance of pupils' voice and participation has also been supported by Flutter and Rudduck (2004), Rudduck and Flutter (2000 and 2004) and Lewis (1995, 2005). It has been argued that much of the research has ignored the views and experiences of pupils with disabilities themselves (Oliver, 1993; Barton, 1999; French and Swain, 2000; Kershner and Chaplain, 2001). In this regard, Tutt's (2007) argument, that the need to recognise the voice of the child is very strong, can only be taken as a new development. Indeed, Lundy (2007) and Jones (2005) both observe that the notion of pupils' voice has received attention in the past decade and this is attributed to the ratification of Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1986). This study joins this new string of studies, to help address the lack of the voice of pupils with disabilities in research about their learning and teachers' voice about IE and experiences.

2.6 Lessons to be learnt from the countries of the North and other countries of the South

The lesson to be learnt from the study carried out by OECD (1999) in eight countries from North America, Europe and the Pacific as reported by Peters (2004, p. 12) was that "changes in pedagogy and curriculum development were found to benefit all students". Furthermore, the thirty-country study on IE practices and other areas

conducted by European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education and EURYDICE (2003) as reported by Peters (2004, p. 12) found that first, transforming special schools into resource centres was a common trend and that the centres specifically:

- Provide training and courses for teachers and other professionals.
- Develop and disseminate materials and methods.
- Support mainstream schools and parents.
- Provide short-term or part-time help for individual students.

Secondly, individualised education plans played a major role in determining the degree and type of adaptations needed in evaluating students' progress. Thirdly, peer tutoring provided cost-savings.

Again as reported by Peters (2004), in the countries of the South, for example, in Malaysia, in order to address the attitudes of the government officials, specific disability training targeted people who make and implement decisions, people in local government and specifically technical personnel who are responsible for designing the built environment, for instance, schools. The other lessons were:

- Successful strategies to address student characteristics have considered economic needs of students and including stipends for subsidised school fees and costs of school uniforms.
- Conditions of teachers' work is a critical input in IE programs.

- Utilisation of the expertise of people with disabilities to train teachers provides cost-savings, for example, Mozambique taps the adults with VI as teachers of the pupils with VI.

2.7 Conclusion

Inclusive Education is an example of values and rights that have to be translated into ethical actions. It is therefore an aspect of international debates and discussions about how best to respond to learners who experience difficulties in school. IE is seen to be justified in the Salamanca Statement by reference to the right of children to education and to an education that is provided alongside the majority of their peers (Dyson, 1999). As pointed out by Dyson (1999), going together with the rights rationale for inclusion has been a discourse in relation to efficacy. In this case, the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) underlines that regular schools with inclusive orientation bring greater social benefits and they improve the efficiency as well as the cost-effectiveness of the whole education system (UNESCO, 1994, ix, para2). Inclusion is based on rights and participation, effectiveness and cost-effectiveness.

The chapter concludes that there is a mismatch between policy and practice as revealed by the literature. Although ISFs have been sources of national influence, the expressed ideas have been diluted, contested, mitigated, or ignored at the contexts of influence, text production and practice. In such contestations, it is hard to find countries that have exceeded the aspiration of ISFs in the context of practice. It is also evident in the literature that there is a strong need for the educational policies

that are properly responsive to the context of practice and experiences of pupils with disabilities and their teachers. This is so because they have first-hand information about what works and what does not work in IE. Their experiences can inform the contexts of influence and policy text production. The thesis therefore argues that IE policy that adequately responds to contexts of practice and achieves leverage on adequate resources can build on the existing goodwill of élites, teachers, and pupils to have effective IE in Malawi's secondary schools.

The review of the literature further strongly indicates the need to approach inclusion not as an end in itself, but as possible means to achieving effective learning and participation. The next chapter sets out the research methodologies used in attempt to address this and other related issues.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 *Introduction*

Chapter Two outlined the theoretical perspective and analytical framework that informed the study. This chapter describes and discusses the research design and methodology. It presents the methods and activities that characterised the research study.

3.2 *The research questions*

To recap, the main research question is as open as follows:

‘What is the policy-to-practice context for inclusion of pupils with disabilities in Malawi’s secondary schools and what are the experiences of teachers and pupils?’

The more specific research questions are:

- (i) To what extent have the international standards and frameworks influenced inclusion policy and practice in Malawi’s secondary schools?
- (ii) How do schools (teachers and head teachers) implement the policy regarding the inclusion of pupils with disabilities in secondary schools?
- (iii) What are the experiences of teachers and pupils with disabilities in inclusive secondary schools?

- (iv) What are the views of teachers tasked with the implementation of inclusion policy at school level and the views of pupils with disabilities about inclusive education?
- (v) What are the barriers to learning and participation faced by pupils with disabilities and the strategies that would help Malawi to enable pupils with disabilities reach their full potential in inclusive secondary schools?

3.3 *Ball's policy-trajectory model and the research design*

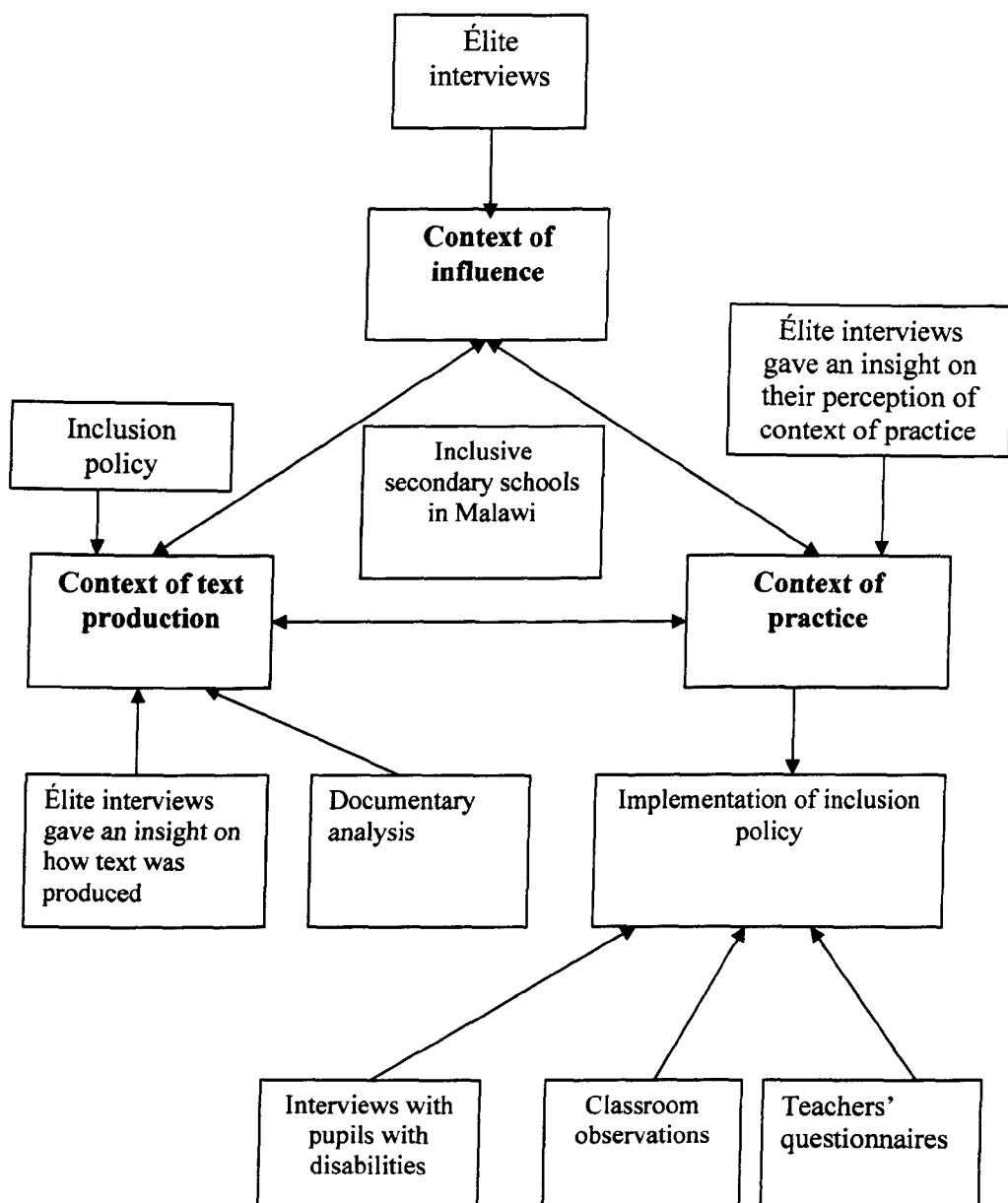
The design of the research followed Ball's policy-trajectory model, with various methods and tools aimed at each of the three contexts. At the context of influence, where key policy concepts are developed, the study used semi-structured interviews with the élites from MoE, UNESCO, MACOHA, Montfort Schools for the Deaf, the Blind and LD and, Ministry of Social Development and People with Disabilities – MSDPD. The élites' role in the study was to provide an overview of the three contexts, i.e. their personal recollections, views of the facts, issues and processes relating to the three contexts. The focus was on the definitional changes in disability and special education (SE), the issues related to the contexts of influence, text production and practice, tensions and contradictions, the barriers to learning and participation faced by pupils with disabilities and the strategies to address them (see semi-structured interview schedule, Appendix 1).

At the context of policy text production, this study used documentary analysis (see the guidelines, Appendix 2) to establish how the context of influence generated inclusion policy enshrined in policy text.

At the context of practice, the study used a survey with questionnaires for teachers to establish how they translated policy text into practice and to collect their wider views on inclusion and reported experiences (see the questionnaire, Appendix 3). In the context of practice, the study also used classroom observations (see the classroom observation schedule, Appendix 4) to establish whether the teachers' classroom practices were consistent with the reported views of practice revealed by survey and to determine the extent to which the goals and values of inclusion were realised within the classroom context. The study further used semi-structured interviews with the observed pupils with disabilities (see semi-structured interview schedule, Appendix 5) in order to explore their views and major lived experiences as pupils with disabilities in inclusive secondary schools.

The diagram below summarises the aspects of the research study and how they were linked following the policy-trajectory model.

Figure 3.1: Ball's model and the aspects of this research study



Model adapted from Bowe et al (1992:20)

3.4 Methodology

Frankel and Wallen (2000, p.13) contend that there is “a need to gain insights into what goes on in education from as many perspectives as possible hence we need to

construe research in broader rather than narrow terms". Such construction of research, however, needs the use of theory and appropriate methodology.

3.4.1 Theoretical perspectives/assumptions and the implications for the study

Before the development of the research design and methodology, the researcher reviewed the theoretical perspectives or assumptions underlying the approaches used and their implications for this study. As pointed out by Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p. 22), research is "guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be studied and understood". Such sets of beliefs and feelings are referred to as paradigms (Guba, 1990 cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p.22) or frameworks (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; 2005). Research paradigms entail "our understanding of what one can know about something and how one can gather knowledge about it" (Grix, 2004, p.78). According to Guba (1999), paradigms are differentiated from each other by the way their proponents respond to the basic questions of ontology ("what is the nature of reality", Bryman, 2008, p.700); epistemology ("the relationship between what the researcher sees and understands", Bryman, 2008, p.700); methodology or design (Cresswell, 1998); and axiology ("values and ethics", Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p. 158). Practically, researchers apply research paradigms differently, narrowly or broadly (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; 2005).

According to Opic (2004), educational research has been influenced by a scientific positivist objective quantitative paradigm and a post-positive/interpretive, naturalistic subjective paradigm. Quantitative research is mainly based on a positivist

paradigm (Newby, 2010). The positivists argue that non context-dependent reality does exist whether it is observed or not and independent of those who create or observe it (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2003; Grix, 2004; Lincoln and Guba, 2005). Hence, reality must be observed in a manner which is not biased to constitute scientific knowledge in its truthful sense (Lincoln and Guba, 2005). The positivists also believe that “there are patterns and regularities, causes and consequences, in the social world just as there are in the natural world” (Denscombe, 2002 cited in Grix, 2004, p.81). In this case, the positivists employ scientific methods to analyse the social world (Grix, 2004, p.81). Many positivists believe that the real purpose of explanation is prediction (Rubinstein, 1981 cited in Grix, 2004, p.81). However, the separation of facts and values is not as clear-cut as presented by the positivists (Grix, 2004). The positivists are thus criticised for making the assumption that there is no division between what we perceive (appearance) and the way things are (reality), that the world is ‘real’, is not mediated by our senses and is not socially constructed (Grix, 2004, p.81). Cohen et al (2003, p.19) argue that positivists disregard “our unique ability to interpret our experiences and represent them to ourselves”. Yet, people can and do construct theories about themselves, their world and act upon them (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Cohen et al, 2003).

The paradigm which succeeded positivism is called the ‘post-positivism or interpretative paradigm’. This paradigm is associated with qualitative methodology. As opposed to the positivists, the post-positivists believe that the world does not exist independent of our knowledge of it (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Cohen et al, 2003; Grix, 2004, p.83; Muijs, 2004). The post-positivists do not agree with the

positivist understanding of the social world that it can be understood in terms of general statements about the actions of human beings (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Cohen et al, 2003; Mertens and McLaughlin, 2004). Grix (2004, p.78) adds that “from positivist to post-positivist positions, we go from approaches attempting to ‘explain’ social reality to seeking to ‘interpret’ or ‘understand’ it”. The post-positivists perceive reality as a construction in individuals’ minds so that it does not exist ‘out there’. The assumption is that through interaction with the social environment, people construct meanings about their world and experiences. This construction differs from one person to another and because of these variations, multiple realities exist (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Merriam, 2002; Cohen et al, 2003; Mertens and McLaughlin, 2004).

This mixed-methods study is located within an interpretative paradigm because it sought to explore meanings given to and interpretations of the policy-to-practice contexts and the experiences of teachers and pupils with disabilities. This allowed the understanding of how policy is formulated, produced into text, and re-constructed and implemented in the context of practice. The concept of disability as a social construction (Mertens and McLaughlin, 2004) has different meanings for different people. Mertens and McLaughlin (2004) argue that the concept of multiple realities as well as social construction of reality entails that the perceptions of different types of persons must be sought. This study explored the interpretations and implementation of inclusion policy text which came out of policy-makers and teachers’ constructions of reality and the experiences of pupils with disabilities and their teachers.

3.4.2 Locating the researcher within the research study

At this juncture, it is crucial to locate the researcher within the research process. Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p.22) contend that, “All research is interpretative, it is guided by the researcher’s set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied”. The researcher therefore is not placed outside her/his research, existing in abstraction, but her/his beliefs, values, knowledge as well as experience have an impact on the research process (ibid, p.21).

The researcher holds a Bachelor of Social Science degree (BSoc) and a Masters degree in Education (SNE). Soon after obtaining a Bsoc degree, the researcher joined Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA) as assistant women and children with disabilities programme officer. MACOHA is a parastatal organisation responsible for the welfare of persons with disabilities. Later on the researcher joined the University of Malawi’s Faculty of Education where there was a need for a lecturer to teach student secondary school teachers SNE. This is an area which was neglected in the University’s curriculum which also trains secondary school teachers. As a teacher educator, the interest has been in SNE, sociology of education, educational psychology, research and consultancies. This research study was stimulated by the plight of secondary school pupils with disabilities in inclusive secondary schools where the researcher went to supervise the student secondary school teachers on their teaching practice.

3.4.3 Quantitative and qualitative methodologies

Scholars try to combine the ‘how’ (understanding which is linked to interpretivism) and ‘why’ (explanation which is linked to positivism) approaches by bridging the gap between the two extremes (Grix, 2004). According to Cohen and Manion (1994); Cohen et al (2003); and Neuman (2006), qualitative and quantitative methodology must be viewed as complementary.

This study employed a mixed-methods approach (Mertens and McLaughlin, 2004; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Newby, 2010; Morse, 2010). A mixed-methods approach includes both quantitative and qualitative features in the design, data collection, and analysis (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2002). This is so because research issues in education are usually so complex that the insights of both approaches are needed if we are to gain a good understanding (Newby, 2010). A mixed-methods approach allowed the researcher to gain a broader perspective and deeper understanding of the contexts of influence, text production and practice and interactions within them that could not be obtained through a single-method of research (Mertens and McLaughlin, 2004). In support of this design, Creswell (1994, p. 177) states, “it is advantageous to a researcher to combine methods to better understand a concept being tested”. Newby (2010, p.91) states that the approach was developed “to resolve research problems that were insoluble by either of the other two approaches by themselves”. Nevertheless, the quantitative methodology in this study was only used descriptively, to find out the frequencies of a wider sample of teachers’ opinions and views on inclusion.

A mixed-methods approach further allowed triangulation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) and added breadth, depth and rigour to the research study. Triangulation is the use of multiple sources of data collection in order to enhance the rigour of the research (Cohen et al, 2000; Robson, 2002; and Punch, 2005). Newby (2010, p.122) states that triangulation is a process of increasing reliability (“the degree to which a measure of a concept is stable”, Bryman, 2008, p.698) and validity (in qualitative research validity is “the extent to which the phenomenon under study is being accurately reflected, as perceived by the studied population”, Lewis and Ritchie, 2003, p.285). Silverman (2001, p.22) contends, “No research method stands on its own”. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) observe that some commentators claim that combined methods in one study can help the researcher to confirm and explain, verify and generate theory all at the same time. Triangulation overcomes the problem of ‘method-boundedness’ (Cohen et al, 2000). Esterberg (2002), Neuman (2006) and Gillman (2008) contend that using multiple kinds of data allows the researcher to balance the strengths and weaknesses of each of them. Neuman (2006, p.149) states that “looking at something from multiple points of view improves accuracy”. Creswell (2009) adds that the use of mixed-methods provides an expanded understanding of research problems. Yin (2003a) states that the problems of construct validity within the study can also be minimised by triangulating the data sources. Construct validity is “the extent to which an instrument measures a theoretical concept (construct) under investigation” (Gray, 2004, p.396). According to Gray (2004, p.396), a construct is “the particular way in which an individual expresses meaning about a concept”.

However, triangulation has its critics. Blaikie (1991) asserts that it is not appropriate to combine methods based on different theoretical positions (cited in Robson, 2000, p. 371). In this study, it was appropriate to combine different methods based on broadly same interpretative position because the nature of the study required an in-depth analysis of multiple perspectives.

Quantitative inquiry gives emphasis to the representativeness of the population under study so as to allow for generalisations (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Cohen et al, 2000, 2003). In this study, it was not possible to make generalisations because of the nature of the study as it was a small-scale research, however, one might argue that the sample was sufficiently diverse to allow consideration of transfer of findings to other situations. Nevertheless, the quantitative survey provided descriptive statistics for the study in the sense that the frequencies on the wider sample of teachers' views on inclusion were calculated.

The study further employed qualitative methodology in order to gain an insight into the views and experiences of the participants with regard to policy-to-practice context. Another reason was that a qualitative approach gave the study an opportunity to interpret the way the participants constructed meanings given to and interpretations of the policy-to-practice contexts. Armstrong (1998) contends that there is a need for research that involves teachers and pupils if new possibilities and new practices within inclusive cultures are to be opened up. Barton (1998) underlines that research that focuses on experiences of pupils with disabilities is a more fruitful way of viewing their school situation.

Flutter and Rudduck (2004, p.2) contend that in order to discover new directions for improving schools, the classroom itself must be taken as a starting point to explore teaching and learning through the eyes of teachers and learners who are closely involved. This is so because “it is only the testimony of pupils and teachers themselves that can provide essential, first-hand evidence” (ibid, p. 2). They further point out that the researcher is able to find out more about teachers’ and pupils’ perceptions of and their experiences in classrooms and schools. The things that teachers and learners consider to be important and that make a difference to learners’ opportunities for successful learning are identified. However, Flutter and Rudduck (2004) observe that although these perceptions might not provide admissible evidence in a court of law, such evidence is an important resource in the context of an investigation whose aim is to improve teaching and learning. This study joined other scholars such as Lewis (1995, 2005), Lewis and Lindsay (2000), Cullingford (2005), and Allan (2005), among the others, who involved the voices of teachers and pupils with disabilities in their studies and this provided insights about their perceptions and experiences of IE.

Peck and Furman (1997 cited in Mertens and McLaughlin, 2004, p.99) argue that focusing entirely on positivist tradition of research prevents the researchers from asking some critical questions concerning the reasons such as the following: why children with disabilities are not doing well in schools.

Qualitative research using naturalistic enquiry enables the researcher to collect data in a natural setting as much as possible (Newby, 2010). Further, the qualitative approach supported the researcher’s preference for inductive, hypothesis-generating

research rather than hypothesis-testing (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Since the qualitative approach is not necessarily meant to test a preconceived hypothesis, it allowed flexibility in terms of research design and data collection throughout the study. This flexibility was important because this study was carried out during the time when there were dynamic international and national debates, discussion and developments on inclusion policy at all levels of life including education.

3.4.4 Sampling strategy, sample size and research sites

Miles and Huberman (1994) underline, it is not possible to study everyone everywhere doing everything. Sampling is therefore necessary. A number of factors were considered when choosing the sample. As pointed out by Silverman (2000) and Stakes (2005), the main factor when choosing the sample for the research study was to decide what would be manageable as well as representative to answer the research questions. Other factors which were taken into account were accessibility of the inclusive secondary schools within the sample and time frame as well as availability of resources in relation to time and effort. Cohen et al, (2000, p.92) argue that,

“the quality of a piece of research not only stands for or falls by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted”.

The size of the sample depends on the purpose of the study and the nature of the population studied (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Cohen et al, 2000, 2003). The study, thus, adopted purposive sampling of the participants and research sites. Purposive

sampling entails “sampling in a deliberate way, with some purpose or focus in mind” (Punch, 2005, p.187). The researcher selected the participants and research sites which would provide sufficient and quality data related to the investigated issues of policy-to-practice contexts and the experiences of teachers and pupils in inclusive schools. In support of this, Denzin and Lincoln (1994), state that many qualitative researchers use purposive sampling method rather than random sampling method because they want to find out groups, settings and individuals where the processes being investigated may occur. Merriam (2002) and Kemper, Stringfield and Teddle (2003) add that since qualitative inquiry seeks to understand the meaning of a phenomenon from the perspectives of the participants, it is crucial to select a sample from which the most can be learnt. According to Patton (1990), it is crucial to select ‘information-rich’ cases for in-depth study. He asserts that ‘information-rich’ cases are those that the researcher can learn a lot from with regard to the issues of central importance to the purpose of the study.

The original sample size for the study was 221 (200 teachers, 10 pupils with disabilities and 11 élites). The sample size was reduced to 154 participants (139 teachers, 4 pupils with disabilities and 11 élites) because some teachers did not return their questionnaires. The number of pupils with disabilities was reduced because the researcher wanted to have detailed and in-depth interviews and classroom observations with them.

In the context of influence, the sample was carefully selected. Thus, eleven élites who had been involved in the formulation of Malawi’s inclusion policy in different capacities were purposively sampled.

In the context of text production, the texts/documents allowed the researcher to compare what was articulated in them with what was actually happening in practice as stated by teachers and pupils with disabilities and observed by the researcher. The texts consisted of relevant legislation and policy documents.

In the context of practice both teachers and pupils were sampled. The sample for the survey included 139 teachers from seventeen secondary schools that enrolled pupils with disabilities. The key factors considered were nature of schools, geographical location and type of pupils' disabilities.

The range of schools sampled included general government secondary schools, government secondary aided schools and a private secondary school in urban, urban-rural (peri-urban) and rural settings in the Southern, Central and Northern Regions of Malawi. Amongst them, the schools were boys and girls secondary schools and two girls' secondary schools. However, it was not possible to visit all the secondary schools that included pupils with disabilities in the country because of distance, economic and time constraints. The schools consisted of forms 1 – 4 with children in the age range of 11-13, 14-16, 17-19 and 20-22 years.

Four teacher-pupil observations took place, one in each of four secondary schools. These pupils had the following disabilities: VI, HI, LD and PI. The small sample of pupils with disabilities allowed more detailed observations and provided an in-depth analysis of the issues at hand.

The selection of the sample for the interviews included the four observed pupils with disabilities. The pupils were aged between 14 and 19 years.

3.4.5 Data collection methods and instruments

The data collection methods and instruments were structured to collect information from contexts of influence, policy text production and practice. A variety of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and instruments used aimed at answering the research questions. The type of research questions and the nature of data sought, time-frame and financial resources had an influence on the choice of the sources of evidence. The qualitative data collection methods in the context of influence included interviews, in the context of text production included documentary review, in the context of practice included observations and interviews. The quantitative data collection method in the context of practice included survey. The development of all data collection methods and instruments were discussed with the researcher's supervisor, a Professor of Education and was informed by theoretical perspectives and other empirical studies.

Context of influence: interview

The first data collection method in this study was the interview. Interviews can be structured, unstructured and semi-structured. On one hand, the following are some of the advantages of interview as identified by Creswell (2008) and Newby (2010):

- Can clarify misunderstanding.

- Data are rich and deep.
- Allows questions to explore issues.
- It provides useful information when you can directly observe the participant.

On the other hand, interview as a method of data collection has limitations as identified by Creswell (2008) and Newby (2010). The first is that it is time consuming. This was mitigated in this study by selecting a sizeable sample of participants that provided the desired evidence and the use of semi-structured interview schedule. The second is that the presence of the researcher may affect how the interviewee responds. This was mitigated by ensuring that the interviewees were relaxed and told the purpose and importance of the study and that they were free to withdraw from the interview if they wanted to. The third is that interview data may be descriptive and provide the perspective the interviewee wants the researcher to hear. Again this was mitigated by triangulating the responses through other sources of evidence (Newby, 2010).

However, this study used semi-structured interviews with elites in the context of influence. This allowed the study to explore the policy-to-practice contexts and experiences more openly and in detail (Esterberg, 2002). The relevant research questions were 1, 2, and 5. Semi-structured interviews further allowed the exploration of participants' subjective meanings (Yates, 2004) of the issues at hand. They enabled instant follow-up of interesting responses as also noted by Cohen and Manion (1994); Cohen et al (2000, 2003); and Robson (2002).

This study avoided common biases in interviews. Poor prompting biased probing and, selective recording of data (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Cohen et al, 2000) were avoided. One major drawback with semi-structured interviews is that there is often too much data collected (Cohen et al, 2000; 2003). This study mitigated this problem by using semi-structured interview schedule.

Context of text production: documentary review

The second data collection method for this study was documentary review (context of text production). Lindsay (2004) contends that documentation is central in the modern affluent world in which we live for the written order forms a cornerstone of modern life. Rose and Grosvenor (2001) point out that educational researchers work with documents which are concerned with educational settings. However, Yin (2003b) argues that documents must be utilised carefully and should not be accepted as literal recordings, for instance, of events that occurred. Heeding this warning from Yin (2003b), this study examined international and national documents. As ‘no document is innocent’, the researcher realised that documents do not simply reflect social reality. They also construct it (Rose and Grosvenor, 2001, p.51). The examination and analysis of the texts in this study sought to identify the values and ideologies contained in them. It also gave the researcher an insight into the wider policy-to-practice contexts. The research question was: ‘to what extent have the international standards and frameworks influenced the policy of inclusion and practice in Malawi’s secondary schools?’

Documentary review corroborates information from other sources (Yin, 2003b) such as interviews, observations and questionnaires. Merriam (2002) adds that the strength of documents as a source of data is that they are already available for use. The findings from documentary data were further counterchecked against findings from other sources, such as survey and case scenarios.

The other strength of documentary data analysis is that the data are in permanent form. This allows re-analysis, reliability checks and replication of the studies (Bryman, 2004; Punch, 2005; Silverman, 2005). The drawback is that the documents available may be limited or partial (Robson, 2002). The study mitigated this drawback by working closely with the persons responsible for the storage of the official documents such as in the MoE and UNESCO. Triangulation of the methods of data collection also helped to address this problem.

The documentary review and examination in this study involved:

- the examination of international and national standards;
- policy documents; and
- published and unpublished works on inclusion policy for context of policy text production.

Context of practice

There were three methods of data collection which were employed for the context of practice. These were survey, classroom observations and interviews with the observed pupils with disabilities.

(a) Survey

The third method of data collection was a small-scale survey in the context of practice. The study used self-completion questionnaires (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Robson, 2002) in order to get larger and more representative sample of teachers' views on inclusion and experiences. Questionnaires benefited the study in the sense that they allowed large samples to be reached without much effort (Esterberg, 2002). The questionnaire allowed the participants to respond to the research questions 1-5.

Overall, the questionnaire had both closed and open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions were easily quantified and indicated participants' views/opinions on inclusion. They offered the participants a set of answers from which they had to choose (Sarantakos, 2005, p.245; Neuman, 2006, p.287). However, the drawback was that they did not provide data in areas unforeseen by the researcher (Sarantakos, 2005, p.245). This drawback was mitigated by the integration of open-ended questions. The open-ended questions allowed the participants to state answers in their own way and in their own words (Pfeifer, 2000 cited in Sarantakos, 2005, p.245; Sarantakos, 2005, p.245; Neuman, 2006, p.287). However, the drawback was that such questions provided large amounts of data which needed extensive time and effort to type all the responses from their hand-written forms. After that the researcher grouped together all the responses to a particular question ready for analysis.

With the questionnaire by contrast with interviews, the researcher was not present to clarify questions to the participants (Esterberg, 2002) when necessary. To mitigate

this problem, the researcher was able to clarify any specific queries with the head teachers as they were asked to distribute the questionnaires to the teachers. The problem of low-response rate (Esterberg, 2002; Neuman, 2006) was minimised by emphasising on the instruments the reason for and importance of the study, and the reasons for selecting the participants. The study mitigated the problem that the valid information, thoughts and feelings of participants may not be obtained (Robson 2002) by constructing and piloting clear and manageable questionnaires (Nardi, 2003) relevant to the study.

The questionnaires were delivered to respective secondary schools in person to avoid postal delays. The headteachers were the researcher's point of contact and they were the ones who distributed the questionnaires to teachers in schools. The completed questionnaires were then submitted to the headteachers for collection by the researcher.

(b) Observation

Observation was the fourth method of data collection for this study in the context of practice. The research question was: 'How do schools (teachers and headteachers) implement the policy regarding the inclusion of pupils with disabilities in secondary schools?'

Dyson et al (2002) identified a relative lack of observational evidence in the existing literature on inclusive schools. The study adopted structured and unstructured observations. Non-participative observations were carried out in four selected

secondary schools, using a simple classroom observation schedule to take detailed field notes (classroom activities) against a timeline. A checklist was also completed which provided background information of the classroom context. This allowed the researcher to stand back from the observations and retain some objectivity (Robson, 2002).

Four detailed teacher-pupil observations allowed the opportunity to collect 'live' data from 'live' situations (Robson, 2002). Merriam (2002) asserts that data from observation represent a first-hand encounter with the phenomena of interest instead of a second-hand account obtained from the questionnaire. The researcher observed the interactions and activities in the classrooms.

However, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) and Sarantakos (2005) have rightly argued that the effects of the observer's presence can never be erased and there might be observer bias. Giving prior notice and spending time to build trust and familiarity mitigated the adverse effects of the researcher's presence. The researcher's dressing was in accordance with the standards of the school in order not to be out of place. The limitation of a single classroom observation was mitigated by interviews with the pupils.

The classroom observations assisted this study to explore the delivery of IE by teachers.

(c) Pupil interviews

The interview was further used in the context of practice. It was used to collect data from the observed pupils with disabilities in relation to their lived experiences as pupils with disabilities in inclusive secondary schools. Interviewing pupils with disabilities was ideal for this study because there is alleged exclusion within disability studies of the 'personal experiences' of living with disabilities (Thomas, 1999). Thomas (1999) asserts that the experiences of individuals do not only tell us about the particular (the micro-environment) in which individuals live out their lives but also about the general (the macro-environment) which make up the broader social context of these lives. As pointed out by De Vout (1999) and Reinhartz (1992 cited in Esterberg, 2002, p.87), a number of feminist scholars have argued that interviews are a distinctively good way to study women and other neglected groups. Some people with disabilities and minority group have not always had an opportunity to tell their own lived experiences. In-depth interviews therefore give them the opportunity to do so. Barton (1998) advocated the need for research that focuses on the experiences of pupils with disabilities as being a more fruitful way of viewing the situation of these pupils. Sheehy et al (2005) assert that it is important to explore the views of child-participants in inclusive settings. Furthermore, Barton (2005) contends that a critical feature of the oppression of people with disabilities has been the extent to which their voices have been excluded. Similarly, Cullingford (2005, p.205) contends that, "the problem is that these consistent voices of pupils expressing what it is like for them are rarely listened to". As a result, Allan (2005) maintains that inclusion policies and practices have been established with poor consideration of what it means for the young people's lives. Yet, "overcoming disabling barriers will include listening to the voice of disabled people especially as they struggle for choice, rights and participation" (Barton, 2005, p.59). Allan (2005)

adds that young people provide some insights which could assist with the shaping of their inclusive learning experiences. Lloyd-Smith and Tarr (2000) point out that:

“the principal justification for giving children a voice in educational policy as well as in research is epistemological. The reality experienced by children and young people in educational settings cannot be fully comprehended by inference and assumption. The meanings that they attach to their experiences are not necessarily the meanings that their teachers or parents would subscribe” (cited in Flutter and Rudduck, 2004, p.133).

Lloyds-Smith and Tarr emphasise the importance of children’s voice in research rather than just listening to what their teachers or parents have to say about the children’s lived experiences.

Pilot study

Prior to data collection, the research instruments such as questionnaire and elite interview schedule were sent to a PhD colleague to check the wording of the instruments and provide comments on their clarity. All the research instruments were duly piloted in Malawi. The aim of the pilot study was to ensure the clarity of the instruments and that the research questions were adequately covered. The methodological issues were also identified. The pilot study provided a clear picture of how much time was needed for the interviews, questionnaires and observations. The main data-collection process took place from December, 2006 to March, 2007. The period was purposively selected because December, 2006 was planned for the

élite interviews. January to March, 2007 was planned for a small-scale survey and classroom observations because the school term started in January. The school term lasts for three months.

3.5 *Data management*

The survey data were recorded on the questionnaire by the participants. The researcher developed a code book which was used to code all the variables in the questionnaires. Each coded variable was entered into the computer ready for analysis.

The interviews, observation and documentary data were recorded by note-taking. The researcher's field journal captured personal reflections, issues, ideas and difficulties that arose from the field research. This was "a developing, tentative running record of on-going analysis and interpretation" (Cohen et al, 2000, p.313) of data. At the end of each day all notes were typed. Data were stored in electronic form and hard copies. Photographs were kept for authenticity but not inserted in the thesis for the reasons of confidentiality and anonymity.

3.6 *Data analysis*

As Cohen et al (2000, 2003) stated, after data collection the next step was data analysis. Silverman (2000, 2005) contends that qualitative data analysis should be done in a rigorous and robust manner so as to increase the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. The analysis of qualitative data was done

concurrently with data collection. This means that data analysis began with the first interview, observation and accessed document (Merriam, 2002). This allowed the researcher flexibility.

The qualitative data were analysed thematically. Thematic analysis is said to be one of the most common approaches to qualitative data analysis (Bryman, 2008, p.554). It emphasises what is said rather than on how it is said (Bryman, 2008). Thematic analysis is “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.79). In other words, it refers to the “extraction of key themes in one’s data” (Bryman, 2008, p.700).

The interview data were analysed according to assigned codes in relation to the themes that emerged from the research questions (a priori themes) and the themes that emerged from the interview data (emergent themes). The thematic analysis followed Braun and Clarke’s (2006) a step by step guide composed of six phases. Phase 1 required the researcher to familiarize herself with the data and this meant reading through the data. Then all data were typed from its hand-written form into a word document and the researcher re-read through the data. The responses from different participants to a particular question were then grouped together, headed by the text of the question. Once this process was completed, the researcher re-read through the data noting the meanings and patterns/themes. In phase 2, the researcher generated initial codes from the data which enabled her to organise data into meaningful groups (Tuckett, 2005 cited in Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 88). Those extracts that were relevant to the study were highlighted and read through again. This phase is what Miles and Huberman (1994) and Punch (2006) called first level coding

which involves assignment of labels to groups of words in the data, coming up with pattern codes and constantly checking what seemed to go with what and what contrasted. First level codes were useful in summarising segments of data and laid a foundation for later higher-order coding which according to Braun and Clarke (2006) is called phase 3.

In phase 3, the researcher searched for themes. The researcher sorted out the different codes into potential themes (consistent ideas which emerged) and collated all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes.

In phase 4, the researcher reviewed the identified themes and refined them wherever possible and collapsed some themes which could go together. Thus, the identified distinct broad and relevant themes embraced all similar themes.

In phase 5, the researcher defined and named the themes. Phases 4 and 5 comprise what Miles and Huberman (1994) and Punch (2006) called the second-level coding which involved the grouping of first-level codes into a smaller and more meaningful patterns or themes.

Finally, phase 6 represented the reporting. The final stage of data analysis was the thick description, interpretation and discussion of the findings (Miles and Huberman (1994) and Punch (2006)). The phases in the analysis helped the researcher to check the consistency of the emerging themes from the interview data. Appendix 1 shows a sample of how the themes were generated.

Documentary data analysis proceeded through careful evaluation as suggested by Rose and Grosvenor (2001). The aims of the documentary (policy texts) examination and analysis were four-fold. These were to identify:

- the nature and purpose for the produced texts;
- the text production process;
- whether the texts include the tenets/principles of inclusion such as non-discrimination, participation and valuing diversity; and
- the constraints and contradictions or ‘spaces’ that such texts carry (Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992).

The dimensions used to structure the analysis of the documents therefore emerged from the above mentioned aims. This was so because the idea was to follow on *élites’* recollections of the drive to adopt inclusion policy, how it was produced into text, whether the policy texts are in harmony with the tenets of inclusion and the constraints and contradictions or ‘spaces’ that such texts carry (Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992). This strategy allowed the researcher to have an insight into the whole process of text production.

With regard to classroom observation data analysis, each set of observation field notes were examined in much the same way as described for the interview data. At the end of observation, the researcher interrogated the field notes and asked herself the following key questions related to IE:

- Whether the interactions were initiated by the pupils or teachers;

- Whether the pupils with disabilities participated in the learning process;
- Whether there was any evidence of exclusion or segregation; and
- How, if at all, the lesson was adapted to the learning needs of the pupils with disabilities in terms of support, teaching and learning materials, and modification of activities (thus valuing diversity).

The data were analysed and coded according to the broad categories derived from the stated questions (a priori categories) and emergent themes that arose from the analysed data. The categories form the basis for thick description, interpretation and in-depth discussion. Furthermore, any additional themes, issues, and surprises that emerged from each lesson for each teacher enabled the researcher to make comparisons and contrasts among classrooms.

Punch (2006) points out that analysis also involve memoeing not only coding. Glaser (1978) defined a memo as,

“The theorising write-up of ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding. It can be a sentence, a paragraph or a few paragraphs. It exhausts the analyst’s momentary ideation based on data with perhaps a little conceptual elaboration” (cited in Punch, 2006, p.201).

In this study, analysis involved coding and memoeing. The researcher took notes of the relationships between the codes and the ideas which came into mind while coding. To minimise the problem of validity, the researcher validated the findings with the participants, examined evidence from other sources discussed in this study

and used it to build a coherent justification for emerged themes and issues (Creswell, 2003).

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) programme 17.0 was used to analyse quantitative data (survey questionnaire data). Each coded variable was entered into an SPSS spreadsheet separately. The frequency and percentage tables and bar charts were generated to present the data because these are more quickly and easily understood by a variety of audiences (Langdridge, 2002, p.403).

3.7 Other issues relating to the research study

In addition to being guided by the policy-trajectory model, the study also complied with the research requirements regarding validity, reliability, trustworthiness and research ethical considerations were dealt with.

3.7.1 Issues of validity, reliability and trustworthiness

Construct Validity

According to Johnson and Christensen (2006, p. 272), construct validity is making use of the available knowledge and measures of the construct being investigated and identifying the specific way in which a construct will be represented in the study being conducted. In other words, it relates to “our theoretical knowledge of the concept we are wanting to measure” (Muijs, 2004, p. 68). This is where the notion of operationalism comes and is useful as a common tool for the researcher (ibid). In this study, the

researcher made sure that what was used as measures of IE, when the study was operationalized, (i.e. theories and perspectives of IE), was a reflection of the original construct of it, and whether these measures did allow for measurement of delivery of IE in Malawi's inclusive secondary schools. Yin (2003) identifies ways of ensuring construct validity in a study and these are utilisation of multiple sources of evidence and establishment of a chain of evidence and this was the data collection phases. In this study, evidence was obtained from the élites using semi-structured interviews, documentary review, teachers using questionnaire, classroom observations and interviews with pupils with disabilities.

In order to minimise threats to validity (basically the extent to which the research actually addresses the underlying concept) at the design stage, the researcher took heed of Cohen's et al (2007) advice. Thus, first, the researcher chose an appropriate time-scale for the study which was conducted in Malawi over the period of three months from second week of December, 2006 to March, 2007. Secondly, the appropriate methods that answered the research questions and appropriate instruments for collecting the required data were carefully selected. Thirdly, an appropriate sample was used. For example, purposive sampling method was used to select the required sample and research sites and participants were allowed sufficient opportunity to portray their experiences (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003).

Threats to validity at the stage of data analysis were minimised by following advice of Cohen et al (2007). Thus, in this study firstly, the researcher attempted to avoid the subjective interpretation of data by interpreting the data systematically to achieve the required results. Secondly, the researcher avoided the poor coding of qualitative data by using Braun and Clarke's (2006) a step-by-step thematic analysis which

comprised of six phases as described in section 3.6 of this chapter. Thirdly, the researcher avoided the selective use of data but analysed all data exactly as presented from the participants. Fourthly, making inferences and generalisations beyond the capability of the data to support such statements was avoided. Thus, the researcher made only those claims sustainable by the data (Cohen, 1994; Cohen et al, 2000, 2003).

Reliability

According to Cohen et al (2007, p. 146), reliability in quantitative research is “a synonym for dependability, consistence, and replicability over time, over instruments and over groups of respondents”. In other words, if the same methods are used with the same sample then the results should be the same (ibid). The procedures were followed exactly as described in this chapter. A thorough pre-testing of the research instruments on a similar sample minimised the threats to reliability (Cohen et al, 2007). It was important that each participant understood the questions in the same way and responses coded without the possibility of uncertainty (ibid). Threats to reliability at the stage of data analysis were mitigated by carrying out systematic data analysis (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003).

According to Bryman (2008, p. 694), inter-coder reliability refers to “the degree to which two or more individuals agree about the coding of an item”. This is corroborated by Cohen et al (2007). In this study, in order to establish the inter-coder reliability of the method of data analysis, a colleague in the research department in Malawi performed a sample analysis of an interview transcript and the extracted themes were compared with the ones which were produced. The themes were

similar. However, with regard to semi-structured interviews, Bush (2002, p. 63) argues that it is not easy to ensure reliability using unstructured or semi-structured interviews. This is so because of the deliberate strategy of treating each participant as a potentially unique respondent.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was achieved through, first, prolonged engagement (“that is sufficient time to build trust and understand the culture of the context”, Aubrey, David, Godfrey and Thompson, 2000, p. 57). The researcher was in the field for three months and two weeks. The period of the field research enabled the researcher to build trust with the participants and comprehend the culture of the context. As a result, the participants were able to provide the required information. Appointments for interviews, classroom observations, documentary examination and survey were therefore made in advance. Of course, this did not mean that there were no time-table alterations considering the busy schedule in offices and schools. This was anticipated accepted but beyond the researcher’s control. However, the researcher, as an observer, found prolonged engagement in secondary classrooms a challenge since the extent of the effects of her presence was hard to mitigate.

Secondly, the measures were devised through persistent observation “in order to identify salient and pervasive features” (Aubrey et al, 2000, p. 57). Thus, the researcher persistently observed what was going on in the field as the data that were being collected.

Thirdly, the measures ensured the triangulation of evidence from various sources as noted above. The researcher adopted the mixed-method approach and used different data collection methods such as interviews, documentary analysis, questionnaires and classroom observations to collect evidence from the contexts of influence, text production and practice.

Fourthly, the trustworthiness measures were enhanced through thick description. Thus, the researcher was able to present both the main themes and exemplify these through presentation of participants' own perspectives. For instance, through the exemplification of the views, attitudes and reported practice expressed in the interviews and survey.

Fifthly, the trustworthiness measures were addressed through peer debriefing which provided analysis from disinterested peers. Thus the findings of the study were presented at the two British Educational Research Association (BERA) annual conferences and feedback thus obtained.

Audit trail further enhanced the trustworthiness of the data. An audit trail of material gathered within the study was kept that would allow other researchers to "trace the original researcher's analysis and conclusions" (Gray, 2004, p. 394). The instruments used to collect data, some sample responses to the questions and a sample of data analysis are attached in the appendix.

3.7.2 Role of the researcher

One of the roles of the researcher was to try to identify and minimise biases as much as possible. Cohen and Manion (1994), for example, argue that the major sources of bias are researchers' tendency to view the participants in their own image. The beliefs that the researcher held as a secondary teacher educator and trainer in SNE might have influenced her perceptions and judgments which in turn had an effect on the behaviour of the participants especially during classroom observations. The researcher's interests as a researcher also shaped the content and direction of her research (Ozga, 2000). Throughout data collection, the researcher tried to be as neutral as possible and observed the events as they occurred in order to minimise the biases.

In terms of the researcher's relationship within the schools, she was aware of a possible 'power differential' or gap that might exist between teachers, pupils and herself because of her position. The role and position of the researcher as secondary teacher educator might have influenced the way she was perceived by the research participants especially in the secondary schools which, in turn, had an effect on their behaviour. In this case, the researcher stressed her role of a learner. The learner's perspective led her to reflect on all aspects of research procedures as well as findings. This role also enabled the researcher to be a curious learner who set out to learn from and with research participants (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992).

3.7.3 Reflexivity

Bryman (2004, p.500) states that social researchers need to be reflexive about the implications of their methods, values, biases and decisions for the knowledge of the

social world they generate. Reflexivity refers to “reflectiveness among social researchers about the implications for the knowledge of the social world they generate of their methods, values, biases, decisions, and mere presence in the very situations they investigate” (Bryman, 2008, p.698). Consideration of reflexivity suggests that researchers should acknowledge and disclose their own selves in the research. According to Patton (2002), this is called ‘self-reflectivity’. In this study, the researcher tried to make explicit all the decisions about the selection of the research topic, design of the study, data collection methods, data analysis, why these had been made, the limitations of the methods used and the researcher’s beliefs. This represented reflexivity and enhanced the credibility of the research since the research procedures were presented as visibly as possible (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The research study’s broad question was open and the overall methodology was exploratory and participatory, allowing for reflexive generation of data. The interviews were carried out at a venue and scheduled time suitable for the participants. The researcher tried to adapt to the changes encountered in the field in terms of changes of dates and time for the scheduled interviews, observations and the collection of completed questionnaires.

Furthermore, reflexivity involved self-reflection and constant reflection on the research process (Robson, 2002). The researcher was not only aware and conscious of what she was doing to data and with the data but also what the data was doing to her as a researcher. However, the researcher was mindful of the argument that overemphasis on reflexivity may privilege authority of the researcher at the expense of the participants’ views (Adkins, 2002 cited in May, 2002, p.332).

3.7.4 Ethical considerations

As pointed out by Lewis (2003, p.66) any research study raises ethical considerations. It is therefore crucial that at the planning stage of research study, ethical issues should be taken into account bearing in mind that they guide and influence the research's methodology and methods (Oliver, 2003). The study was sensitive to the following ethical issues as highlighted in the literature: informed consent, access and acceptance, confidentiality, anonymity, betrayal, and deception.

Informed consent, access and acceptance

Lewis (2003) states that in any research study, participants' informed consent should be obtained. This entails giving the participants information about the nature and the purpose of the study, how data will be used and what participation will require of them. Letters seeking permission from relevant authorities and schools secured the consent of gate-keepers. Careful establishment of rapport and the study's interactive approach enhanced the research participants' willingness and consent. This was in recognition of the participants' rights to participate or not and to withdraw from the research study at any point they might want to (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, 2005; Cohen and Manion, 1994; Cohen et al, 2000, 2003, 2007). In addition, participants were assured that they would be given a chance to look at the findings in order for them to check if they were the correct reflection of what they said, if they wished.

Access and acceptance entail access to the schools where the research was conducted and accepted by those whose permission the researcher needed before carrying out

the study (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Cohen et al, 2000, 2003, 2007). As stipulated by Marshall and Rossman (1999), the research design section should have plans for negotiating access to the site as well as participants through formal and informal gate-keepers in an organisation. In this study, acceptance and access for the researcher depended on a shared common purpose and active participation.

The purpose and contents of the research, confidentiality and anonymity, the use of the information they provided and who would use this information (Punch, 2005) was explained to the participants and authorities through prior written communication, and orally upon the first visit to the offices and the schools. Punch (2005) highlights that experience has shown that people cooperate and the quality of data improves when this is done properly and professionally. The letter recommending and supporting the research study was obtained from the Institute of Education, University of Warwick and presented at the MoEVT so that permission to carry out the study in the researcher's country would be granted. The Deputy Director, Secondary Education at MoEVT headquarters in turn wrote a consent letter which was presented to all headteachers at the schools that participated in the research study. Access to the teachers who answered the questionnaires, observed teachers and pupils was also obtained through headteachers. Headteachers explained the purpose of the study and its contribution to teachers, so as to seek their willingness to participate in the study. Headteachers then distributed the questionnaires to teachers. With regard to the *élites* (key national figures), the researcher contacted them by telephone. The researcher explained to them the research study and its aims. Thereafter, the *élites* were asked if they could be interviewed. The interviews were done at the venue, date and time chosen by the

participants. The consent from MoEVT headquarters, head teachers, teachers and pupils commenced the data collection process.

Confidentiality and anonymity

Some prospective participants may refuse to participate if they are not assured of confidentiality and anonymity (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Cohen et al, 2000, 2003, 2007; BERA, 2003). The researcher assured all the participants that all information given would be treated with the strict confidentiality and that their anonymity and privacy would be protected.

Betrayal, deception and harm

Betrayal and deception have implication on the findings. Miles and Huberman (1994, p.203) warn that, “If people feel betrayed by you when they read a report, it becomes almost impossible for them to accept it as a reasonable interpretation of what happened”. The researcher tried to conduct the research study without deceiving, betraying or harming the participants in any way. The study was characterised by tact, honesty, sensitivity, dignity and respect for the privacy of the participants (Tilstone, 1998). The researcher tried to interpret and present the findings sensitively without betraying the participants in any way.

Participants (pupils with disabilities)

Rose and Grosvenor (2001) maintain that researching the views of children brings great ethical concerns. The study grappled with the challenges of sensitive ethical issues that needed to be tackled carefully. The issues concerned the fact that the observed pupils had disabilities and that they were children. Bines (1995) identified some of the problems with research in the field of special needs. She contends that this type of research incurs major difficulties and calls for more critical scrutiny, perhaps, than for other aspects of educational as well as social research. Bines (1995) argues that dilemmas, personal and social values and vested interests are issues that the researcher has to confront. In addition to these difficulties, the researcher has a crucial duty to pay close attention to persons with disabilities, to look at their lived experiences, to search deep into their personal thoughts and feelings so as to comprehend what they are narrating, and not to listen to their voices only superficially (ibid). This study conformed to these mentioned ethical issues. The pupils were relaxed and their interview questions were made simple so that their voices could be heard. Their behaviour and responses were monitored closely for signs of discomfort and/or distress.

3.8 *The limitations of the study*

There are a number of factors that affected this study and these were the limitations just like in other small-scale research undertaken by a single person. These were the scale of the research study. However, these limitations were anticipated during the research design and therefore the study was carried out with these limitations in mind. The mitigation of these limitations in the study is explained.

This was a small-scale research study and the researcher was not able to cover a representative sample of inclusive secondary schools, teachers and pupils with disability in the country due to distance, financial and time constraints. This meant that generalisation of the findings needed to be guarded. However, the use of a mixed-methods approach and an effort to use both quantitative (though descriptively) and qualitative data mitigated to some extent the constraints arising from the size of the sample. This is because the results of analysis of various data sets allowed triangulation as above.

3.9 Conclusion

This study was located within an interpretative paradigm. The main research question was open leading to the exploratory nature of the study. The research design adopted Ball's policy-trajectory model and employed a mixed-methods approach. The justification for the approach was that the exploration of the policy-to-practice contexts and experiences of teachers and pupils with disabilities required an in-depth research study that was contextualized and based on capturing individual perceptions and personal experiences.

The exploration of these contexts allowed for interpretation of the way policy text was interpreted, formulated, produced and put into practice. The issues regarding threats to validity, reliability, objectivity and trustworthiness at the stages of research design, data collection and data analysis, and ethical considerations were presented.

The next chapter presents and discusses the findings from the élite interviews.

CHAPTER 4: CONTEXT OF INFLUENCE: ÉLITE INTERVIEWS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Three discussed the research design and methodology for this study. This chapter presents and discusses the élite semi-structured interviews findings in the context of influence.

The findings in this chapter provide an understanding of how the context of influence generated policy that is enshrined in policy text and how this is perceived, reinterpreted and implemented by teachers in inclusive secondary schools (context of practice) in Malawi. The concepts of disability and SNE are used interchangeably in these findings, to reflect the responses.

4.2 Aims

The aim of the élite semi-structured interviews was to explore the policy-to-practice contexts from the perspectives of élites. The role of the élites in this study was therefore to provide an insight into their personal recollections, opinions, and views of the facts or events, processes, ideologies and issues with regard to the development and implementation of inclusion policy in Malawi.

4.3 Method

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect evidence from the *élites*. This method is within the context of the study's mixed-methods approach.

4.3.1 Participants (the *élites*)

The total sample for the study was 11 *élites* who were involved in policy-making in different capacities as indicated in Table 4.1. In terms of political representatives, some of these *élites* have political affiliations but they cannot be mentioned in this study for confidentiality reasons. They are represented by numbers in this chapter, for confidentiality and anonymity reasons. The sample was selected purposively. Table 1 shows the background information of the participants.

Table 4.1: *Élites'* Background Information

	Name of Ministry/Organisation	Gender	Current position
Élite 1 (E1)	MoEVT	Female	Deputy Director, Secondary Education
Élite 2 (E2)	Ministry of Social Development and People with Disabilities (MSDPD)	Male	Chief Disability Awareness Officer (CDAO)
Élite 3 (E3)	Montfort School for Learning Difficulties	Male	Deputy Director (DD)
Élite 4 (E4)	Montfort School for the Deaf	Male	Deputy Director (DD)
Élite 5 (E5)	Montfort School for the Blind	Male	Deputy Director (DD)
Élite 6a, Elite 6b (E6a, E6b: they represented the same organisation)	UNESCO	Male	Programme officer for Education
		Female	Deputy Executive Secretary
Élite 7 (E7)	MoEVT	Male	Director of Education Planning
Élite 8 (E8)	Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA)	Male	Executive Director
Élite 9 (E9)	SNE Department (MoEVT)	Male	Deputy Director (DD),

			SNE
Elite 10 (E10)	MoE, Northern Education Division Office	Male	Senior Education Methods Advisor
Elite 11 (E11)	MoE, South West Education Division	Male	Principle Education Methods Advisor
Total Participants		11	

Note: Elite 6a and Elite 6b represent two officials from UNESCO but they decided to be interviewed together. For the purpose of analysis of the interview as one person, their views were combined.

4.3.2 Materials

The semi-structured interview schedule, developed in consultation with the researcher's supervisor and informed by theory, practice and other research, was structured according to Ball's trajectory model. The schedule had four sections, as shown in Appendix 1: These were:

- élites' (participants) background information (demographic information);
- the issues related to the context of influence;
- the issues related to context of policy text production; and
- the issues related to context of practice.

4.3.3 Procedures

The appointments for the interviews were booked in advance through telephone. The purpose and importance of the study were explained to the élites and their consent obtained. The interviews took place in the élites' offices at agreed dates and times.

The research questions were covered in the four sections of the semi-structured interview schedule. The rest of the procedure is reported in Chapter Three.

4.3.4 Data analysis

The research questions (i), (ii) and (V) guided the exploration of policy-to-practice in the context of influence.

The data were analysed thematically. The analysis of data was done concurrently with data collection. The thematic analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) step by step guide composed of six phases as described in Chapter Three.

4.4 Findings

The following sections form a dense description of synthesised findings. The broad themes for each section emerged from the research questions. The order of the presentation of the findings follow Ball's policy-trajectory model. The findings are presented with limited discussion as this will be done in the discussion section. The emerging themes and issues from analysed data form the sub-titles and the basis for thick description, interpretation and in-depth discussion as presented in the discussion section.

4.4.1 Élites' perceptions of the context of influence

The responses about the context of influence relate to both perception and experiences, as the élites operate in the context of influence.

Perceived changes in the views and definitions of disability and special education (SE)

The élites were generally agreed that there had been changes regarding views and definitions of disability and SE. There had been a certain **attitudinal change** (E1, E5 and E11) in that according to E5, pupils with disabilities were no longer viewed as incapable of participating in their learning process and the development of their society. E11 explained that at *“ministerial level there is Special Needs Education Department and there is more focus on special education”*.

The élites further gave evidence of a **conceptual change** (E2, E7, E8, E9, and E10). For example, E2 stated that, *“Disability is viewed as a cross-cutting issue now. It affects and is affected by all aspects of life namely, economic, social, cultural, political, environmental and technological”*. He added, *“Special education is now more than teaching the deaf and blind persons”*. E7 explained as follows: *“In most cases we are now using the word ‘physically challenged’ instead of handicapped. We are moving fast in terms of special needs. We might be struggling in terms of what these mean”*. E8 reflected the social model of disability when he stated that disability was viewed as a social construct, with E9 sharing a similar view. E8 explained: *“Now, disability is being viewed as a social construct, which means that the emphasis is no longer on the impairment of the person but that of the environment. The environment needs to change so that it is accessible. It changed*

from the medical model to social model". E10 agreed with E9 that the understanding had been broadened although it had not broadened that much. He explained that people with asthma and spinal bifida were not considered.

The élites further gave evidence of a **policy change** (E4 and E9). E4 gave an example of the development of a National SNE policy. E9 mentioned the adoption of a policy of education for all (EFA) which came about as a result of changes in the views and definitions of disability and SE.

There had also been **institutional change** (E4). E4 stated, *"There is a change. We can see indicators of change, for example, the establishment of SNE Directorate in the Ministry of Education"*.

Views on whether all categories of SEN should be addressed in mainstream secondary schools

A majority view was that not all categories of SNE should be included in mainstream secondary schools. Seven of the élites disagreed that all categories of SNE should be included in mainstream secondary schools. E2, E4, E5, E7, E8, E9 and E11 felt that those with severe and profound SEN should not be included but be sent to special schools.

The seven élites' perceived reasons for disagreeing that all categories of SNE should be included in mainstream secondary schools was that severe and profound SNE needed special schools where there were first, **full-time SNE teachers** (E4, E5, E8).

E4 stated, *“These cannot be admitted in mainstream secondary schools. They have to be admitted in special schools because they need full-time specialised teachers”*. E5 added, *“They need experts fully trained in how these can be handled”*. He further stated that, *“In an inclusive setting, we are not fair to them”*. E8 shared the same view. The second reason related to **parental involvement**. E4 stated that in special schools parents came in to help. The third reason was the **availability of more care** (E7) and that pupils were given **special attention** (E8, E11) in special schools. E11 responded, *“They need to go to special schools because it is a challenge to the teachers as it is difficult for the teachers to focus on all of them. They need their own attention”*. The fourth reason related to **reasonable teacher-pupil ratio** (E9). He stated, *“Personally I believe that certain persons should go to special schools where the teacher-pupil ratio is small. This cannot be seen in mainstream schools”*.

E1, E3, E6 and E10, however, held that all categories of SNE should be addressed in mainstream secondary schools. These elites provided reasons for their views. The first reason related to **the availability of resources**. E1 stated, *“Yes, all to be included, resources permitting”*. E10 shared the same view. E3 based his reason on **non-discrimination**. He stated, *“Yes, because they are all people like anybody else”*. However, E3 was also conscious that inclusion was a challenge. He pointed out, *“I know it is very challenging. If we say inclusion, we need to look at the environment even though it is more challenging in a developing country like Malawi”*. E6 based his reason for inclusion on **current guidelines**. He stated, *“According to the current guidelines, the starting point is to include everybody and efforts should be made that government should put in place what is stated in international standards”*.

The Élites' perceived major influences for change

The élites were invited to state what they perceived to be the major influences for change on secondary school inclusion policy in Malawi. The perceived major influences for change were first, **pupils' increased access to education** (E2, E5, E6, E9, and E10). E2 said, *"Increased number of children with special education needs at primary schools"*. E6 added, *"The presence of the pupils with disabilities who happen to find themselves in those education institutions"*. E9 pointed out that, *"There have been a number of pupils who qualify for secondary education. This necessitated the enrolment of these pupils"*. E10 shared the similar view.

The second mentioned influence for change was **international standards and frameworks** (E3, E6, E7, and E9). E7 stated, *"I will put it as partly international standards under EFA which has made us realize that we cannot leave out people with disabilities. Hence, our trying to say let us talk about special needs in secondary education"*. E9 gave an example of UN Standard Rules on Equalisation of Persons with Disabilities.

The third influence of change was **identification and assessment**. E4 stated, *"Identification and assessment has made it possible to see the children to go to secondary schools, for example, assessment through hospitals, parents, Malawi National Examination Board selection criteria"*.

The fourth mentioned influence was **advocacy, democracy and human rights activists**. E3 gave the example of people who advocate for the right to education for

all children such as FEDOMA, Malawi Union for the Blind, and Civil Society Collation for Basic Education. E4 stated, *“Malawi National Association of the Deaf are bringing a lot of good news to the nation that these children have potentials as well and the more we see them in primary schools, the more we see them in secondary schools”*. E5 added that, *“Human rights activists are looking at how these people have been handled in the past and are advocating for change”*. E9 added, *“People with disabilities themselves demand their right to education”*. E11 gave an example of *“Democracy which talks about equality and the right to education for every citizen”*.

Institutional change was the fifth mentioned influence for the perceived change. E4 gave an example of the establishment of the Ministry of Social Development and People with Disabilities (MSDPD) which he said was helping a lot and was fighting for people with disabilities. E7 added the establishment of SNE Department at the MoE Headquarters.

The **performance of the learners** was the sixth influence for change. E5 stated, *“People have realized that people with disabilities can perform well if they are given a chance”*.

The **Constitution of Malawi** was the seventh mentioned influence for change. E7 stated: *“The constitution of Malawi has helped to expose that the society has different types of people and is pushing that people with disabilities should be recognised as well”*.

The eighth influence for change was **international pressure**. E7 pointed out, *“As a global village, we have to go along with the rest”*.

The eighth influence for change was **affirmative action policy**. E9 mentioned affirmative-action policy which demanded access to secondary schools for pupils with disabilities who just obtained a general pass in their Malawi Secondary Certificate of Education (MSCE).

Perceptions of tensions and contradictions within changing policy for inclusion

The élites were invited to indicate whether they thought there had been tensions and contradictions within changing policy for inclusion in Malawi. The élites noted contradictions related to **lack of training**. E2 stated, *“Regular teachers in secondary schools are not equipped to handle children with special needs”*. E4 agreed:

“There have been tensions and contradictions. I remember there was one time when we said, ‘let us beef up the curriculum for TTC with SNE’. It happened but the tension was who is going to teach this staff? There was also the problem of the content, e.g. those for VI should be for VI and those for HI should be for HI, therefore, this poses a problem because when the VI teacher encounters a pupil with HI, he/she does not know how to handle those pupils”.

E5 stated, *“Some teachers refuse to teach these children saying they are not trained to teach and handle them”*. E6 shared the similar view. He stated, *“Teachers have*

been forced to be accountable to learners with special needs but have not been prepared for such challenges”.

The élites further noted contradictions related to **lack of a common understanding** among stakeholders. The perceptions among the élites indicated that it was not clear what IE meant in secondary schools. This resulted in lack of uniformity of practice. E8 concluded, *“We think what we are practising in Malawi is inclusion when it is integration”*. He also observed that there was no systemic approach in the sense that input from parents and stakeholders was inadequate and that politicians do not practice what they say. ”. E9 felt that there was no consensus on the nature and delivery of inclusion policy. He stated, *“Some people were saying that we should do away with special education so that we have inclusive education. Disability movements themselves have been saying, no, we need special schools”*.

There was an indication that some of the élites thought that the lack of common understanding was partly due to lack of proper orientation. E6 stated that other stakeholders were not clear on what was happening at secondary schools. He argued that lack of proper orientation on the definition of SNE made people focus on one or two aspects of SNE. This led to some contradictions in relation to **unequal distribution of resources**. E10 shared the similar view. He expressed,

“Yes tensions and contradictions have been there because we are looking at the way resources are distributed. You find that some areas have complained that we do not have resources and therefore we cannot carry on board everyone. So the issue is that tension has arisen from the fact that there is

unequal distribution of relevant resources to ensure that pupils with challenges as such can actually be taught properly”.

With regard to human resources, such unequal distribution also pertained to availability of support. Thus E11 noted that there was **inadequacy of support** as a contradiction.

The élites noticed contradictions and tensions rising from **lack of policy clarity on the delivery of IE**. E6 felt that the turning into a university of one of the institutions set up to train specialist primary school teachers was a contradiction. He also argued, *“Government is trying to establish an institution for SNE but this is also a contradiction. Instead of strengthening the already existing institutions and making the programmes inclusive, we are excluding the programmes”*. He further argued,

“When we look at the MoE, traditionally it has not been inclusive. Their policies have been implicitly exclusive. Now they are saying that secondary schools have to be inclusive yet the issues of SNE are not included in the tertiary education programmes which train secondary school teachers”.

E7 shared a similar criticism. He stated, *“SNE should go beyond what is being said. We need SNE at higher level rather than just at basic education. Higher education is failing to take SNE on board*

4.4.2 Élites perceptions of the context of policy text production

The élites were also invited to indicate their perceptions regarding the context of text production.

The élites' opinion of inclusion policy as text in Malawi

There were mixed opinions among the élites regarding inclusion policy in Malawi. Some élites (E2, E4, E6, E7, E9, E10, and E11) noticed positive developments as a result of inclusion policy. Some (E3, E5, E8) offered some criticisms regarding inclusion policy in the country. E1 felt that the SNE directorate would best handle the question.

For positive developments, the élites noticed first, the policy highlighted both **social inclusion** and **rights to participation**, as indicated by E2.

The second positive development noted was some reflection of **attitudinal change**, exemplified by allocation of resources towards the production of materials. For example, E9 stated that, *“We are advocating it, doing it here and there and the Government is positive because MK56 million was allocated for teaching and learning materials. Malawi is good at adopting international policies”*. (MK56= 56 million Malawi kwacha-currency).

On the other hand, E4 was cautious, suggesting that the policy texts probably did not fully include all pupils with disabilities. In his words:

“Of course it is normal to say that all should go to secondary schools even with the normal ones but it is not possible. It also happened in UK where they wanted to close all boarding schools but later they realised their mistake and retained some. Governments can see inclusion as cheap, but we should be careful because we cannot include all children. So, Governments should still be able to run those expensive schools”.

E3 augmented this view, that the current policy texts may not be fully inclusive. The second criticism related to **lack of policy embracing all SNE**. For instance, E3 stated,

“I think people need to come together and decide what type of inclusion Malawi should adopt because each country has its own policy. There are policies like SNE, Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, National Disability Policy, PIF and they all talk about EFA. So we need to come up with a policy which encompasses all SEN”.

E7 and E8 shared a similar view.

Some of the élites indicated that the policy texts may not have fully dealt with the problems of **inadequate resources**. E3 responded, *“Resources are not there, so we need to come up with a policy which addresses the resources on the ground”*. E4 added, *“The policy is not being fair to some extent because we do not have secondary schools which have special facilities for special cases”*. E5 explained,

“I can see that our policy of inclusion is a bit weak. If we want to include somebody that person must be given resources. Right now the curriculum is changing but there are no books in Braille, sign language is not in place, materials for children with SNE are expensive. In the districts those schools which accommodate these children are not given extra funding to get resources for them”.

In addition, E10 felt that, *“The policy does not ensure that there is first and foremost the production and distribution of teaching and learning materials”.*

Some of the élites critiqued the policy texts by stating that the **policy was not in line with international changes**. E8 noticed, *“We are not in line with the international changes. In terms of our policy of inclusion, I am not sure whether we are basing on international standards like Salamanca. Papers on inclusion do not talk of separate special needs education”.* He concluded, *“This does not make any sense”.*

E6 then concluded, *“The policy is not well articulated in the sense that individual schools work out something for pupils with disabilities. MoE people have never come out to say these are special programmes for these pupils”.*

4.4.3 Élites perceptions of the context of practice

The élites were further asked to indicate their perception about inclusion in the context of practice.

Consensus on the need for SNE teacher training

The élites agreed that **training** in SNE was essential for all teachers in inclusive secondary schools. With regard to the new entrants to secondary school teaching profession, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9 and E10 stated that SNE should be included in teacher training curriculum as inclusion was the agenda. They explained that this would enable teachers to acquire knowledge and skills of how to teach and handle pupils with disabilities which was the requirement for all teachers. E3 added that the national policy for teacher development should have the element of SNE to ensure that the requirements were met. E7, E8 and E9 added that the new entrants also needed some specialisation in the field so that there should be specialist teachers since there were different categories of SEN. However, E7 also underlined that teachers should not have problems when they met with different categories of SNE. E8 concluded that, *“Special needs module should be compulsory”*.

As for the experienced staff, the élites suggested **orientation to SNE** and **in-service training**. E2 and E5 stated that they needed to be oriented in SNE so that they could also meet the needs of learners with SEN. E3, E4, E6, E7, E8, E9, E10 and E11 added that experienced staff needed in-service training. E6 explained, *“All secondary schools belong to clusters, they need in-service training to orient them on emerging issues of SNE so that they will be able to deal with issues of SNE”*. E10 suggested that the Government should come up with a deliberate training programme so that experienced staff should be trained in various areas of SNE. He warned, *“If they lack this programme their mind-set will be ‘this one cannot do it’ but they need to be trained so that they can change their mind-set”*.

Mixed views to teachers' perceived responses to inclusion policy

There were very mixed indications among the élites, regarding the teachers' response to inclusion policy in the country. On one hand, some élites (E2, E3, E4, E5, E7, and E9) agreed that teachers' responses to inclusion policy had been positive but there were some challenges related to support, training and teaching and learning resources. To show positive response, there was **attitudinal change** among the teachers. E3 explained, *"Through the media, teachers are aware of the rights to education for pupils with disabilities and they have now accepted the children with disabilities"*. He further stated that the teachers felt that if they said no, it meant that they were denying the rights of the children. He points out that the challenge was how to support the teachers. E5 added, *"They have responded positively in the sense that now they are able to understand that if a chance is given to a child with disability, he/she can do better. But the challenge is giving the teachers the skills of how to handle these children"*. E7 explained that,

"In principle, they have been positive. We are the ones who have let them down in terms of inadequate teaching and learning resources. Teachers are trying their best not to be seen as isolating the child. No child has been sent away by teachers saying that they cannot handle the child with disability".

E9 stated that the teachers were positive in the sense that they were always asking for orientation in the area of SNE and were waiting for the Government to go forward to orient them in SNE.

On the other hand, three élites (E6, E8 and E11) perceived some teachers' negative response to inclusion policy because of the **current school infrastructure, lack of training and lack of teaching and learning materials**. E6 explained that the negative response comes in because *"teachers are not well prepared to take inclusion policy on board"*. E8 explained that the teachers were responding negatively because they lacked delivery skills. E11 shared the similar view. He stated,

"The response has been negative and this is attributed to lack of knowledge and skills on special needs education. For example, my own observation is that teachers do not pay attention to pupils with disabilities. They do not know how to include them when teaching and learning".

E10 elaborated,

"There has been a mixed response because most secondary school teachers feel that these pupils should go to special schools. They feel with the current infrastructure in place they cannot learn. They will have a lot of difficulty to teach these pupils in the current schools. They feel they should cater for those pupils with physical challenges because they feel that they have shortfalls in themselves, they have no training, no teaching and learning resources. So they feel they are challenged and are not ready to take up the challenges. They feel that those pupils ought to be sent to special schools which have got special facilities for them".

Perceived positive and negative impact of inclusion on schooling standards

There was perceived positive and negative impact of inclusion policy on standards of secondary schooling. The positive impact related first to **pupils' access to education and participation** (E2, E3, E4, E5, E9, E10 and E11). E2 and E4 noticed the increased number of children who attended secondary education. E3 and E9 noticed other learners with disabilities who had gone up to the university. E5 elaborated,

“Inclusion policy has produced good results because if you visit an inclusive school or class, pupils with special needs are free to learn with others without special needs. Those without special needs can also benefit from those with VI, for example, in my case I learnt better English from a VI person and I improved. They are contributing towards so many activities”.

E10 added that people with disabilities who had traditionally missed their right to education are now mixed with others. E11 stated that the policy had positive impact because it provided the pupils with disabilities a chance to interact with the able-bodied pupils and share experiences.

Other elites thought that there had been positive **attitudinal change**, among teachers. E7 stated, *“On the teachers' side, a teacher is ready to start considering the aspect of how I should take on board a child with special needs”*. E9 said, *“I can see that with inclusion children are learning with people with disabilities and get*

good attitude. This is why inclusion is very powerful and society becomes inclusive as well”.

One élite noticed some **institutional change** within the schools. E7 stated that *“I would say more of it has been from the angle where all institutions are responding in terms of building ramps in new buildings, some old ones as well”.*

However, there were also perceived negative impacts of inclusion policy on standards of secondary schooling. The first related to **discrepancy in benefits amongst the pupils with disabilities**. E1 stated, *“Due to inadequacy of resources some students have not effectively benefited from the inclusion policy”.*

The second disadvantage related to **increased work-load** for the teachers. E10 explained,

“The questions the teacher may have are: who will teach these pupils? How will they be taught? So teachers feel like they will have more work than they would normally have because these pupils need that special kind of attention.”

The third perceived disadvantage of inclusion was about **negative attitude**. E10 stated, *“The negative impact is that these pupils may not be well included into these schools because of the negative attitudes some teachers have about this”.*

E6, on his part, argued that there was no impact because no study had been conducted on the issue. E7 added that, *“The bigger picture is yet to come”.*

Wide perception of the values and goals of inclusion among elites

The values and goals that are often associated with inclusion were mentioned by all the elites as advantages that were perceived to be experienced in the context of practice. In this connection, the first perceived advantage of inclusion was that **pupils were able to develop self-confidence and self-independence/reliance** (E1, E5, E6 and E8). E5, for example, responded, *“Inclusion is now leading to self-independence”*.

The second perceived advantage was **socialisation, interaction and feeling of acceptance** (E1, E3 and E11). E3 elaborated, *“Pupils with disabilities have a chance of socialising and interacting with pupils without disabilities”*. E11 added that pupils with disabilities felt accepted in inclusive schools.

The third advantage was **contribution to development** (E4, E6 and E9). E9 elaborated, *“Benefits are diverse: society at large is going to benefit because once you have completed your education, you contribute towards the development of the nation”*.

The fourth advantage of inclusion was **attitudinal change among other pupils** (E2, E5 and E6). E2 stated that as resources were shared among all pupils, the non-disabled children developed positive attitudes towards children with disabilities. E5 explained, *“Parents used to be overprotective of their children with VI but with inclusion policy, the parents have seen that their children can also do something*

even if they are not there for them". He further stated that, "People used to fear that if you stay close to someone with VI you will also eventually become visually impaired but because of inclusion policy, people have changed their attitudes".

The fifth advantage was **celebration of diversity** (E2, E3). E3 stated that inclusion leads to celebration of diversity because if the Government wanted to develop policy, it would just be for all capturing all differences or diversity that is there.

The sixth advantage of inclusion was the **avoidance of discrimination** (E7, E10). E10 explained, *"It is important because we are trying to avoid discrimination. We are taking everyone on board. We are saying everyone is equal"*.

The seventh advantage noted by a few élites was that the policy contributed towards the **removal of stigma** (E7, E11). E7 elaborated, *"The handicapped have a feeling of pity and when they are included this feeling is removed"*.

The eighth advantage was **learning through discovery** (E5). He explained that inclusion was making people with SN to understand how they could perform in a different setting and they also discovered that they could also perform and beat those who were 'normal'.

The ninth advantage was **peer support** (E4). He responded that the pupils with disabilities were being supported by the other pupils without disabilities.

Context of practice barriers and suggested strategies for greater pupil learning and participation

The élites noted various barriers against learning and participation for pupils with disabilities. Connected to the context of text production, the élites noted the **outdated Education Act** (E8). E8 explained, *“The Education Act was enacted in 1962. It is supposed to address the policy”*. The suggested strategy to address such barrier was the revision of the Act.

The first perceived barrier related to **inadequacy and lack of trained teachers in and orientation to SNE** (E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9, E10 and E11). E5 explained, *“Secondary schools teachers are not oriented to teaching pupils with VI and this affects the pupils”*. E7 added,

“Those teachers and head teachers who are not trained do not know how to deal with such situations. For example, I had mild VI but the teachers did not know that. I was one of the best pupils in class and the teacher placed all the best pupils at the back. This affected me because I could not see from the back but the teacher did not know this because of lack of knowledge on how to identify pupils with SN”.

The élites’ suggested strategies to address such barriers were the **training** of all teachers in SNE, **inclusive initial teacher training curriculum**, **increased budgetary allocation** for teacher training, **orientation** to the issues of SNE and **deployment of special teachers**.

The second perceived barrier was **unfriendly/inaccessible infrastructure** (E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9, E10 and E11). E6 elaborated, *“Most schools have steps instead of ramps; toilets are not designed to cater for pupils with disabilities. Lights in classrooms are not adequate”*. E10 added,

“There has not been a deliberate effort to construct secondary schools which will cater for pupils with physical challenges. We have primary schools, yes, but from primary schools where do they go and then they find themselves in secondary schools which have been built just to cater for non-challenged pupils per se”.

The suggested strategy to address such a barrier was the modification of the existing school infrastructure.

The third perceived barrier was **inadequacy and lack of teaching and learning materials/resources** (E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E8, E9, E10 and E11). For instance, E3 elaborated that the libraries were not well resourced for those with VI and HI. E4 mentioned inadequacy of and poorly stocked libraries in the secondary schools and that most secondary schools had no libraries. E5 added that,

“The major barrier is lack of special teaching and learning resources for those with VI because in most cases these are regarded as expensive. Even though they are given some funding but secondary schools think that they are expensive and opt to buy something else”.

E1 mentioned inadequacy of resource centres. The suggested strategies to address such a barrier were the **procurement and provision of adequate teaching and learning materials/resources, increased budgetary allocation** to education, the **spending guidelines, the construction of resource centres and construction of more libraries and equipping them with adequate up-to-date teaching and learning materials** in the secondary schools. For instance, on the spending guidelines, E5 suggested that,

“If the Government is allocating funds to secondary schools, it needs to emphasise that for example 2% should go for teaching and learning resources, then the secondary schools will comply to that because at the moment it is like optional. Most secondary schools therefore opt to buy something else as they regard these as expensive”.

On the issue of libraries, E4 explained, *“There is a need for well equipped libraries in all secondary schools where the pupils can access books to supplement their knowledge gained from the classroom”.*

The fourth perceived barrier was **negative attitude** (teachers’, other pupils’, and society’s negative attitudes) [E1, E2, E3, E8, E9, and E10]. E3, E8 and E9 perceived teachers’ negative attitude towards pupils with disabilities to be one of the barriers. E9 stated, *“Negative attitudes of teachers who are not oriented to pupils with special needs”*. The elites’ suggested strategies to address such a barrier were **sensitisation and role modelling**. For instance, E9 explained, *“Sensitise the teachers and head teachers on these issues. In this way we will have better progress”*.

E3 E2, E3, and E8 perceived negative attitudes by non-disabled pupils towards pupils with disabilities to be another barrier. The élites' suggested strategies to address such a barrier were also sensitisation and role modelling in the secondary schools.

E10 perceived society's negative attitudes towards pupils with disabilities. He explained,

"We have tended to look at pupils with challenges as incapable that they cannot make it and therefore we have unnecessary sidelined them in a number of issues. So they do not feel comfortable, they do not feel they are welcomed in society. They feel that they are aliens and they ought to be with special teachers. That has been the thinking and, so far there have been institutions that have catered for these pupils but most of them are basically primary schools".

The suggested strategy to address such a barrier was to have **role models**. E10 suggested that,

"Teachers need to learn that given the opportunity these pupils with physical challenges can learn and those who have made it through can really help as role models to change the mind-set of teachers. They would say, 'Oh those with disabilities can also make it in life. We thought those with visual impairment, hearing impairment and learning difficulties cannot make it and

that disability is not inability'. Then we will be able to move in the right direction".

The fifth perceived barrier was **inadequacy and lack of special teachers** at secondary school level (E1, E7, E8 and E11). For instance, E11 explained,

"Inadequacy and lack of specialist teachers at secondary school level gives the normal teacher pressure because she/he has to take to specialist teachers the pupils' work to be transcribed and take it back again. Those with hearing impairment cannot understand the explanations because of lack of specialist knowledge on the part of teachers".

The élites' suggested strategies to address such barrier were **training and inclusive initial teacher training curriculum**. For instance, E1 explained, *"Initial training curriculum should include issues of disability to enable as many teachers as possible to assist the students adequately"*. E8 added there was a *"Need for an inclusive policy which is well thought of and this should direct the SNE programmes and practices"*. E11 further suggested that there was a need to train itinerant teachers for secondary school level.

The sixth perceived barrier was **inappropriate curriculum design** (E4 and E6). For example, E4 stated that there was *"Lack of curriculum that accommodate all the capabilities of all children and that subjects are not preparing the children very well in order for them to fit in the community"*. E6 added that the barrier emanates from the way the curriculum is addressing the issues of SN at secondary level. The

suggested strategy to address such barrier was curriculum change. E6 elaborated, *“Curriculum change to address the issues of SNE. I believe that curriculum issues have got an impact on practice”*. E4 suggested *“The addition of vocational training component in the secondary school curriculum to prepare the pupils to fit in their communities if they cannot make it to the universities or colleges”*.

The seventh perceived barrier was **poor working conditions** for teachers and this de-motivated them (E3). E3 gave an example,

“This year we had to go around the whole country and discovered that most of the teachers are not doing their job because of poor working conditions. They say why should we bother ourselves when we have not been promised anything”.

The suggested strategy to address the barrier was the improvement of the working conditions to motivate the teachers.

The eighth perceived barrier was **lack of confidence** (E5). He gave a specific example that, *“Some learners with VI do not have confidence”*. The suggested strategy to address such a barrier was increased participation. For example, E5 responded, *“They have to be involved in all school activities where teachers can discover their talents and they should be motivated to exercise them”*.

The ninth perceived barrier was **stereotyping against pupils with disabilities** (E1). E8 explained, *“Some parents still feel children with disabilities have no room in education”*. The suggested strategy to address such a barrier was simply sensitisation

so that the parents should know children with disabilities also have room in education.

Élites' views on whether the particular barriers to learning and participation faced by pupils with disabilities were gender-related

There were mixed and contrasting opinions on whether the barriers to learning and participation faced by pupils with disabilities had gender dimensions. E1, E2, E3, E8 and E10 responded that there were no particular challenges for including girls with disabilities which were different from those arising from including boys with disabilities in mainstream secondary schools. E3 and E8 explained that academically, the challenges could not be that different because the environment, teachers, and teaching and learning materials were all the same for all pupils. E3 further stated, *"To me inclusion is inclusion. It does not matter whether it is a girl or a boy"*.

However, some élites perceived some gender-related challenges in relation to girls with disabilities. Such challenges, according to those élites, made girls with disabilities suffer a double jeopardy, as pupils with disability and as female pupils. First, the girls' were **vulnerable to sexual abuse or harassment** (E5 and E6). E5 stated, *"Many girls with disabilities are more abused because people think that they cannot say anything or cannot say no"* with E6 sharing the similar view. The suggested strategy to address such barrier was protection from abuses. E5 and E6 stated that teachers should protect them from abuses.

The second barrier which related to girls with disabilities was **son preference** (E6 and E9) on the part of certain parents. E6 stated that the problems of girls with disabilities were compounded by the fact that some parents preferred to send boys to schools rather than daughters. E7 shared the similar view. The suggested strategies to address such barrier were the sensitisation of parents, through role models. For instance, E9 elaborated, *“The Government must champion the sensitisation of the country about the importance of including girls with disabilities as well. Get role models to the society so that people can see changed lives because of inclusion”*.

The third barrier was the **shortage of boarding schools which catered for girls with disabilities** (E4). E4 four explained, *“There are very few boarding secondary schools which can cater for all girls with disabilities. As a result some girls with disability have to walk long distances to get to secondary schools and in the end they drop out”*. The suggested strategy to address such barrier was the construction of more boarding secondary schools to cater for girls with disabilities.

The fourth barrier was **gender prejudices against females** (E5). E5 explained, *“In my opinion I can see that the challenges for girls are worse as compared to boys. In our society we still think that females are inferior and now to be a girl with disability this is even worse”*. The suggested strategy to address such a barrier was for teachers to accord protection to girl pupils.

The fifth barrier was **exclusion** (E5). He stated, *“When it comes to involvement in school activities, girls with disabilities are excluded”*. The suggested strategies to address such a barrier were participation and motivation. E5 explained that teachers

needed to support and involve such girls in each and every activity and motivate them when they were doing something.

The sixth barrier was **gender stereotyping against girl pupils** (E7). He elaborated,

“There are so many expectations put on girls. When you look at girls, they are like flowers. If they are handicapped they feel that they are not like flowers if they are not talked to. This does not apply to men. In schools if a young man is chatting to a girl with disability, people think that there is something wrong with that young man. By nature you put them on the corner so that they cannot do anything”.

The suggested strategy to address such a barrier was to review and change the policy. E7 stated, *“One of the critical factors for change is we need to demystify, for example, policy- how comprehensive is the policy addressing this”.*

The seventh perceived barrier related to girls was **teasing** (E8). *“Socially they are different i.e. the girls tease each other like they pour water on the floor so that their friends can step on it and they start laughing at them”.* The suggested strategy to address such barrier was orientation. E8 explained, *“Socially, the school staff and the pupils need to be oriented towards disabilities. They should know what disability is”.*

In line with all these, E9 concluded, *“So a girl-child with disability suffers double impact unlike a boy-child with disability”.*

4.5 Discussion

The evidence from the responses of the élites provide insights regarding the contexts of influence, text production, and practice regarding Malawi's attempt to implement inclusive education policy in its secondary schools.

4.5.1 The context of influence

The findings indicate that ISFs have been a big influence on inclusion policy and policy is in line with such standards and frameworks. In their responses, the élites expressly admitted such influence and alluded to the social model of SNE, which has been an influence on the development and content of international standards. This is consistent with UNESCO (2001), Winter (2006) and Ainscow (2005), who note that the idea of inclusion has become so central to the education policies of many countries. This influence of ISFs has been helped by Malawi's transition towards principles of democracy and increased rhetoric about the importance of human rights principles and human rights. As such principles, such as non-discrimination, are also core values of inclusion, it is consistent that the élites also mentioned the importance of such principles. In addition, as the country's Constitution enshrines human rights and the principle of non-discrimination, it can be observed that the context of influence in Malawi has increasingly embraced the values of inclusion and the goals of IE.

Secondly, there has been good will of policy-makers and good understanding of the current policy-to-practice context. There was no one among the élites who disagreed

with the importance of IE. One key reason for this goodwill is connected with a strong conceptual shift in the views from the medical model towards the social model. For example, some élites acknowledged such a conceptual change. Such a change was also evident in the increasingly dominant definition of disability and SNE by them. In the light of the evidence, it can be noted that although there is some pragmatism with regard to the workability of inclusion in Malawi's context of influence, there is little contestation. The pragmatism expressed by some élites, with regard to the capacity to implement inclusion, for example, suggests that the acceptance of ISFs, the social model, and IE in Malawi has not been merely 'robotic activity' (Ball, 1994). Instead, it has been based on genuine goodwill that is supported by the moral force of inclusion argument.

The point that there is goodwill for IE in the context of influence is supported by further clear findings from the responses of the élites. The élites stressed the view that there was need for policy guidance to address the gap between current policy and practice. The élites in the context of influence further agreed that there was a need for policy guidance to address barriers. They also underlined the need for clarity about the practicality of having all pupils with disabilities enjoy their rights to learn in inclusive secondary schools. Several élites, for example, were very clear that pupils with multiple or profound disabilities needed to be in special schools not in general inclusive schools, where there was inadequate support for their learning. The élites were further unequivocal about the need to address the balance between primary and secondary school. Indeed, from the findings, it can be argued that the implementation of inclusion policy in Malawi's secondary schools blocks those that may have been properly supported at primary school level.

Fourthly, while admitting the need to re-look at the policy to address such challenges, the élites were so pragmatic as to recognise that economic resources may not be available soon due to the budgetary constraints in the country. This is one reality that problematises inclusion for countries of the South such as Malawi. Although the goodwill may abide in the context of influence, such good intentions are heavily constrained by resources and competing priorities, which often outweigh the need to implement IE as it should be delivered. It is in this sense that inclusion and IE become contestable in Malawi's context of influence.

Fifthly, it can be noted from the findings that not all changes that need to be made may require substantial economic resources. The élites were clear that there were contradictions in the system that could have been avoided or be easily ironed out. The findings point towards the position that the lack of a strategy for training at national, regional and school level for key staff is a major flaw in the context of influence, which adversely affects the context of practice. The fact that there was little University training on SNE or other forms of SNE teacher training was, according to the élites, an example of such contradictions. That needed to be addressed so that some of the problems faced in Malawi's schools, of which the élites were acutely aware, could be resolved.

4.5.2 The context of policy text production

The findings about the context of text production from the élites' responses suggest that though generally in line with international standards, policies contained glaring gaps that would adversely impact on the delivery of IE in the context of practice. The

inability to address the shortage of resources, the continuing lack of parity between primary and secondary school implementation of inclusion are all indicators that the policy text production process resulted in policies that were inadequate from the outset.

Such perceived gaps in the policy prompted some *élites* to argue that the policy on IE was not fully in line with ISFs. This apparent contradiction with the overall goodwill for inclusion in the context of influence can be explained by the *élites*' perceived dissatisfaction with goals of inclusion as expressed in ISFs. Thus, in addition to noticing that there were insufficiently trained personnel for the implementation of IE policy, some of the *élites* underlined that the policy texts did not adequately deal with issue of unfriendly/inaccessible school environments.

Although there has clearly been a shift towards the social model in the policy texts, according to the *élites*, some of the *élites* noted that the policy texts were not strong enough. This was so because the current Education Act (GoM, 1962) was considered by the *élites* as out of date. The implication is that there is no appropriate legislation that can govern the implementation of the various policies, let alone having some elements of such policies embedded in law.

4.5.3 *Élites*' perceptions of the context of practice

In the context of practice, the *élites* noted general goodwill on part of most teachers and pupils to have inclusion policy implemented. In this regard, the *élites* could mention advantages of IE policy as achieved in Malawi. Interestingly and

encouragingly, these examples were the same or similar to those often expressed to be the outcomes of inclusion, including that IE makes economic sense for the potential of the learner and her or his contribution to the well-being of society.

However, in their typical pragmatism and frankness, the *élites* regarded training and sensitisation as key strategies that would address critical challenges in that context. Persisting negative attitudes such as stereotyping and parents' preference for boy education, could, according to the *élites*, be addressed by sensitisation on the goals and principles of inclusion. Pedagogical and other problems of practice, according to the *élites*, could be addressed by initial teacher training and in-service training. For example, most of them spoke very strongly in favour of this view. This, of course, is consistent with the requirements of ISFs. The need for teacher-training in SNE was also echoed in the works of Eleweke and Rodda (2002), UNESCO (2002) in the countries of the South, and MacBeath et al (2006) in the country of the North. The irony appeared to be that there were not enough resources to implement such strategies.

The lack of capacities to deliver IE in the context of practice was, according to the *élites*, a major cause of the negative effects of IE policy in Malawi's secondary schools. Key among such disadvantages was increased workload for teachers that required skills development. E10 remarked that some teachers feared that they would have more work than they would normally have had as these pupils needed that special kind of attention. This is not a problem that is peculiar to Malawi or countries of the South, for it has been noted by MacBeath et al (2006) and Boys (2005) with

regard to English schools. However, it can be noted that the severity in a country like Malawi, where there is little skills development on SNE, is acute.

A major capacity gap, which would require more economic resources, was mentioned by all the élites as lack or shortage of teaching and learning resources. This confirms the findings in the works of Ainscow (1999) and MacBeath et al (2006) in English schools; Eleweke and Rodda (2002) in the countries of the South; and MoE (2005, 2006) and Njaidi (2006) in Malawian secondary schools.

In the Malawian context of practice, however, according to the élites, the difficulties to implement IE are compounded by poor working conditions. The suggested strategy to address such conditions was an improvement in teacher working conditions in order to improve their motivation. Such working conditions related to housing, salaries, teaching and learning environments, promotion, and medical schemes. This confirms the finding in the work of Peters (2004) who reported this, with regard to IE practice, as one of the lessons to be learnt from the countries of the South. She explained that most implementation efforts focus on teaching teachers effective instructional strategies and neglect the conditions within which teachers must carry these out. Yet, these have a significant impact on the teachers' ability to deliver effective IE.

The mixed opinion among the élites on the gender dimensions of SNE and IE in the Malawian context may suggest uneven knowledge of gender aspects of disability among the élites. The élites who stated that there were no differences in the problems encountered between boys and girls were genuinely focused on the problems that

they perceived applied to IE as a whole. Others, however, were in addition, able to perceive the double jeopardy suffered by girls, compared to boys. Such uneven knowledge among the élites helps explain why the context of influence lacks a clear strategy on how to address gender disparities for pupils with disabilities.

4.6 Conclusion

There was clear goodwill for inclusion and IE among the élites interviewed, who, persuaded by the moral force of the values of inclusion, genuinely desired the adopted IE policy to be well-implemented. Such support for inclusion was aided by Malawi's new Constitutional order and the increasing human rights rhetoric since the country shifted from a one-party state towards democracy. In this regard, the social model and ISFs were neither contested nor resisted in the context of influence.

Furthermore, the evidence revealed that the élites displayed an impressive level of pragmatism and frankness about the problems inherent in the policy texts and gaps and challenges in the context of practice. In the context of text production, it is clear among the élites that key strategies such as the training of teachers and other SNE staff and the leveraging of resources for SNE were gaps, were either inadequate or missing. They further acknowledged the existence of inequality of provision between primary and secondary schools.

The élites indeed were acutely aware of the problems faced by teachers in implementing IE policy in the context of practice. Such problems even appeared to

overshadow gender dimensions in the policy texts and the delivery of IE in the context of practice.

The élites, however, appeared helpless with regard to the leverage of resources for SNE, a point on which IE policy has to encounter other competing priorities. It is in that sense that IE policy can be said to be contested in the context of influence. There were also, however, according to the élites, contradictions that could have been avoided or could be addressed. Such contradictions largely related to expecting a largely untrained group of teachers to implement a policy on which there were inadequate resources, especially teaching and learning materials, and insufficient training for teachers. Much as there was a shortage of teaching and learning materials, it can be concluded that there is yet to develop a critical mass of teachers and SNE support workers to implement an IE policy that does not address the critical issue of how to leverage resources for SNE.

The next chapter presents, interprets and discusses the findings from the documentary analysis.

CHAPTER 5: CONTEXT OF POLICY TEXT PRODUCTION

5.1 *Introduction*

Chapter Four presented and discussed findings from the élite semi-structured interviews in the context of influence. Following the policy-trajectory model, this chapter examines and analyses the policy texts on inclusion (context of policy text production) with regard to the education of pupils with disabilities in secondary schools. It then presents, interprets and discusses the findings for each text and conclusions are made.

5.2 *Aim*

The aims of the documentary (policy texts) examination and analysis were four-fold.

These were to identify:

- (i) the nature and purpose for the produced texts;
- (ii) the text production process (whether the process involved those in the context of practice);
- (iii) whether the texts include the tenets/principles of inclusion such as non-discrimination, participation and valuing diversity as stipulated in international standards/frameworks; and
- (iv) the constraints and contradictions or 'spaces' that such texts carry (Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992).

5.3 Method

The documentary examination and analysis provided evidence from the context of text production and some insight into policy-to-practice contexts. This method, as discussed in Chapter Three, is within the context of the study's overall mixed-methods approach.

5.3.1 Materials

The examined and analysed documents (texts) included the:

- The Education Act (Government of Malawi-GoM, 1962);
- The Handicapped Persons Act (GoM, 1972);
- The Constitution of the Republic of Malawi (GoM, 1994);
- Vision 2020 (GoM,1999);
- National EFA policy (MoEVT, 2002);
- Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (GoM, 2006);
- Education Policy Investment framework (MoEVT, 2006);
- National Education Sector Plan (MoEVT, 2006);
- National Disability policy (Ministry Responsible for People with Disabilities and the Elderly-MRPDE, 2001);
- National Policy on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (MRPDE, 2006); and
- The National Special Needs Education Policy (MoEVT, 2007).

5.3.2 Procedures

The documents provided secondary source data so accessing and analysing involved desk research. The appointments with relevant offices to collect the documents (texts) were booked in advance through telephone. The purpose and importance of the study were explained to the officers and librarians concerned and their consent obtained. The researcher collected the documents at the agreed dates and time. Some of the documents were read from the libraries and notes were taken while other documents were photocopied.

5.3.3 Data analysis

The research question which guided the examination and analysis of the texts was: ‘To what extent have international standards/frameworks influenced the policy of inclusion and practice in Malawi’s secondary schools?’ The texts were categorised into three groups: legislation texts, broad national texts, and specific policy texts on SNE. The categorisation of the texts enabled the researcher to determine how ISFs have influenced the texts and identify how the issues of disability and inclusion with regard to the education of pupils with disabilities in secondary schools were articulated at various policy levels. Documentary data analysis and examination proceeded through careful evaluation as suggested by Rose and Grosvenor (2001). The texts were analysed according to the aims stated under section 5.2 in this chapter. The issues were categorised according to the broad themes arising from the stated aims (*a priori emergent*).

5.4 Findings

The texts revealed that there have been some noticeable positive developments in the SNE sector since the dawn of the new political era in 1994. The Government has produced various policy documents towards guaranteeing and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities to education in line with ISFs. The following sections present the findings from the examined and analysed texts, the discussion and conclusion. The presentation and discussions are in the present tense because texts are currently used in the country.

5.4.1 Legislation texts

The examined and analysed legislation texts are the Education Act; the Handicapped Persons Act, and the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi.

The Education Act (GoM, 1962)

(a) Nature and purpose of text: the invisibility of IE

The Education Act is rooted in the medical model. It was enacted in 1962. This was before Malawi become independent as a nation and the Act was self-governing. It was enacted to regulate and guide the MoE in its development and implementation of education policies.

Section 4(3) of the Act makes provision for the establishment of a special advisory council to advise the Minister of Education on matters related to special aspects of education. Other than the possibility of this council advising the minister about SNE, there are no special objectives strategies for the education of pupils with disabilities in secondary schools.

(b) Text production process: no evidence of representation of the interests of people with disabilities

The Act was debated and passed by the country's then Legislative Assembly which since 1961, included representatives of the African party that eventually became a ruling party upon independence in 1964, the Malawi Congress Party. At this time, SE was still predominantly delivered by missionaries and not through Government's schools and focused on primary education.

The process did not include the participation of people in the context of practice regarding the education of pupils with disabilities in secondary schools.

The Handicapped Persons Act (GoM, 1972)

The Handicapped Persons Act heavily reflects the medical model.

(a) Nature and purpose of text: a heavy reflection of the medical model

The Handicapped Persons Act was passed in 1972. The Act was passed to address issues related to the welfare of people with disabilities. Its orientation is very much based on the medical model of disability. It establishes the Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA) and regulates the work of that organisation. MACOHA acts as the Government's agent in promoting the welfare of persons with disabilities. MACOHA is responsible for the administration of rehabilitation services, promotion of public interest in the welfare of persons with disabilities, administration of vocational and special training centres and raising of funds and donations for the welfare of persons with disabilities.

The Handicapped Persons Act further makes a provision for the voluntary registration of persons with disabilities [Section 19(2)]. However, prior to the registration, according to Section 19(4 and 5), the person is required to be examined by the authorised officer, usually a medical practitioner. If the authorised officer is satisfied that the examined person is a handicapped person, he/she then issues a certificate to the examined person. The issued certificate is then taken to the Executive Secretary of MACOHA who in turn enters the name of the person in the register and issues certificate of registration to that person. The Act also provides for the registration, direction, control and regulation of the associations whose objectives include the welfare of persons with disabilities [Section 20(2)]. In its objectives therefore, this Act adopts the medical model in attempting to treat or help people with disabilities. There is also no specific provision on the education.

(b) Text production process: little debate or contestation

The Act was passed by Malawi's Parliament which, by that time, included members of only one political party, the Malawi Congress Party. There was therefore little debate on it.

Constitution of the Republic of Malawi (GoM, 1994)

Malawi's Constitution was passed when the social model already became a major influence of pupils with disabilities in secondary schools.

(a) Nature and purpose of text: the legal shift of the paradigm towards the social model

The 1994 Constitution of the Republic of Malawi was drafted after the transition from a single party system of Government to multi-party democracy (GoM, 1994). It was passed to change the legal and governance order from a one-party system of Government where human-rights were not enshrined to democracy, after 30 years of dictatorship. This was a result of internal and international pressure, with many arguing that Malawi should at least comply with minimum international standards. Thus the Constitution contains a Bill of Rights and Human-Rights.

Chapter III of the Constitution provides the underlying constitutional principles and principles of national policy. Section 13 (a) of the chapter provides for gender equality in all spheres of life including education. In terms of education, the principle in section 13 (f) recognises the importance of providing adequate resources to the education sector and of national policy to devise programmes in order to

- (i) eliminate illiteracy in Malawi;
- (ii) make primary education compulsory and free to all citizens of Malawi;
and
- (iii) offer greater access to higher learning and continuing education.

With regard to people with disabilities, the principle in section 13 (g) makes a provision for support through:

- (i) greater access to public places;
- (ii) fair opportunities in employment; and
- (iii) the fullest possible participation in all spheres of Malawian society.

The Constitution contains a Bill of Rights in Chapter IV. The Constitution further prohibits discrimination on any grounds including disability. Section 20 (1) of the Malawi Constitution states that,

“Discrimination of persons in any form is prohibited and all persons are, under any law, guaranteed equal and effective protection against discrimination on grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, nationality, ethnic or social origin, disability, property, birth or other status”.

Similarly, constitutional provisions on the rights of children under section 23 (1) entitle children to equal treatment before the law. Section 25 (1) stipulates that “all persons are entitled to education”. Section 30 (2) further states that,

“The State shall take all necessary measures for the realisation of the right to development. Such measures shall include, amongst other things, equality of opportunity for all in their access to basic resources, education, health services, food, shelter, employment and infrastructure” [Section 30 (2)].

In nature therefore, Malawi’s Constitution reflects the social model and the values of human rights and inclusion. It further is specific on about what the country needs to do for people with disabilities, including the education of pupils with disabilities. However, legislation specifically on education and the well-being of people with disabilities, the Education Act and the Handicapped Persons Act are yet to reflect the social model and the Constitution is yet to be used to challenge these outdated pieces of legislation.

(a) Text production process: greater representation of the interests of people with disabilities

The text production process involved a constitutional conference and a constitution drafting committee. After adoption, the Constitution had one year 1994-1995, of transitional operation. It came into definitive force in 2005. It has since been amended by the Parliament several times. Between 1998 and 1999, the Constitution was technically reviewed. One prominent civil society person with disability, who later became a junior minister, was a member of that special Law Commission.

5.4.2 Broad National texts

The broad national texts that guide the other policy texts and promote inclusion of pupils with disabilities in mainstream secondary schools include Vision 2020 (GoM, 1999), the National Education for All Policy-NEFA (MoEVT, 2002), Education Policy Investment Framework-EPIF (MoEVT, 2006), Malawi Growth and Development Strategy-MGDS (GoM, 2006), and National Education Sector Plan – NESP (MoEVT, 2006).

(a) Vision 2020 (GoM, 1999)

Nature and purpose of text: recognition of inclusion and SNE

Vision 2020 (GoM, 1999) represents Malawi's long-term development strategy. As stated in the document, Vision 2020 was developed amidst increased concern that progress on basic long-term development goals had been slow and somewhat disjointed. There had not been significant social and human development. That, together with the unpredictable nature of the global economy, had necessitated the use of long-term strategic thinking and management of the development agenda. Vision 2020 sets out Malawi's vision in these terms:

“By the Year 2020, Malawi as a God-fearing nation will be secure, democratically mature, environmentally sustainable, self-reliant with equal opportunities for and active participation by all, having social services, vibrant cultural and religious values and being a technologically driven middle-income country” (Section 1.4).

On education, Vision 2020 states that:

“The challenge to improving education is improving access, quality and equity in primary, secondary and tertiary education; increasing uptake of science and commercial subjects; increasing skilled people in technical and vocational education and training; improving special education; improving access to and the quality of tertiary education; improving performance of support institutions in the education system; and developing effective and efficient management in education system” (Section 7.2.7.1).

Chapter 7, section 7.2.2 of the Vision 2020 makes a provision for inclusion of pupils with disabilities at all levels of the education system including secondary education. It sets strategic options with regard to the improvement of SNE. These are:

- Ensuring of appropriate designs to cater for people with disabilities;
- Offering of equal education opportunities to people with disabilities;
- An increase of the number of institutions offering special education;
- An increase of the number of special education teachers; and
- Improvement of management in the education system.

Thus, Vision 2020 does not only reflect the need for inclusion, but also the importance of SNE.

Text production process: a participative approach

The conceptual framework for developing Vision 2020 was adapted from the National Long-Term Perspective Studies (NLTPS) approach developed by the

African Futures Group in Abidjan. The NLTPS methodology was used as a tool for setting priorities for development and development management. This methodology emphasized strategic long-term thinking, shared vision and visionary leadership, citizen participation, scenario planning, strategic management and national learning. The process of creating the Vision further involved workshops, nation-wide consultations with Malawians to solicit their aspirations and perspective of how to attain them. This was done in 1998-1999. In this process, there were people with disabilities who participated.

(b) National Education for All (NEFA) Policy (2002)

Nature and purpose of text: an attempt to embrace EFA

Malawi's National Education for All (NEFA) policy was developed in 2002 to respond to the World Declaration of Education for All (EFA) in 1990 (UNESCO, 1990) that took place at the Jomtien World Conference in Thailand. Malawi is one of the countries that endorsed EFA. The NEFA policy gender goals were to: eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieve gender equality in education by 2015. Its focus therefore was on gender equality. In nature therefore, NEFA was directly influenced by an international set of standards/frameworks, i.e. EFA.

Text production process that included SNE practitioners

The development process of the NEFA policy involved meetings and consultations with all stakeholders in and outside the education system. Those working to provide services for persons with disabilities participated in this production process.

(c) Education Policy Investment framework (EPIF) (2005)

Nature and purpose of text: addressing cost concerns

The Education Policy Investment framework (EPIF) 2005 is a revised version of EPIF 1995. The EPIF is intended to be an education sector-specific planning framework for the period 2005-2010. It is to help priority setting with regard to spending. The EPIF itself indicates that the following necessitated its developments:

- The challenges which emanated from the implementation of the free primary education policy in 1994;
- Lack of an articulated policy on secondary and higher education;
- Greater concern with social equity which necessitated more attention to poverty alleviation issues and the reduction of gender and other types of social and regional disparities;
- Political liberalization which called for improved governance and accountability at all levels of social life including the educational system;
- Increased prominence of science and technology, especially information technology which could narrow the gap between Malawi and the rest of the World;

- The reality of globalization and regional interaction efforts which called on Malawians to look for economic opportunities beyond their national borders;
- The enhanced role of the private sector in educational provision; and
- Realisation and recognition of the central role that the community had to play in the effective implementation of educational initiatives.

The pertinent strategy from the perspective of this study is to take “appropriate measures to promote equity, particularly for girls and children with special needs” (Section 1.5.4, page 5). More specific to secondary education, the aim is to increase access from 18% in 1998 to 30% by 2012 (section 4.3.2, page 24). This was to be done through the expansion of private sector in the provision of secondary school education, establishment of at least one secondary school per education zone, and increase in the construction of day secondary schools.

On SNE, the EPIF requires the provision for “mildly disabled students within the regular school system” and “to increase their intake from 1,000 to 2,000 by 2013 (section 4.3.2, strategy 9, Page 25). Equity is to be improved through the provision of a bursary for pupils with disabilities, starting from 2002 (section 3.3.3, strategy 1, Page 25). The needs of “seriously disabled students” (section 4.3.3:3, Page 25) are to be addressed through a “collaboration framework” (ibid) with other Ministries and civil society organisations. With regard to infrastructure, the response is merely to revise the design of buildings. For trainee teachers, the EPIF envisages at least one module on teaching student with disabilities.

Text production process: IMF and World Bank-Driven

The EPIF (2005) was driven by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank as part of macro-economic stability management. It was developed by those involved in policy-making, including those with responsibility for the education of pupils with disabilities. The EPIF also drew from other texts such as Vision 2020 (GoM, 1999), EFA (UNESCO, 1990), the Constitution of Malawi (GoM, 1994) and the Education Act (GoM, 1962).

(d) Malawi Growth and Development Strategy -MGDS (GoM, 2006)

Nature and purpose of text: the focus on poverty alleviation with recognition of SNE

The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) is the overarching strategy for Malawi for 2006/07 to 2010/2011 fiscal years. It replaced the 2002 Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (MPRSP). A key reason for the MGDS is to serve as a single reference document for policy-makers in Government, the private sector, civil society organizations; donors and cooperating partners; and the general public on socio-economic growth and development priorities for Malawi. The MGDS is within the context of nation's agenda to realise Vision 2020 (GoM, 2006b). It is meant to be and remains the most dominant planning framework for the Government. Activities and programmes outside its budget lines are more likely not to be financed.

The key priority areas of the MGDS are: agriculture and food security; irrigation and water development; transport infrastructure development; energy generation and

supply; integrated rural development; prevention and management of nutrition disorders, HIV and AIDS. As stated in the document, these will enhance the achievement “of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), thereby recognizing the importance of sectors of health, education, gender, environment and governance” (GoM, 2006: xii).

The five identified themes of the MGDS include:

- sustainable economic growth (theme 1);
- social protection and disaster risk management (theme 2);
- social development (theme 3);
- infrastructure development (theme 4); and
- improved governance (theme 5).

The development framework of the MGDS was built around these five broad thematic areas in order to support the six key priority areas (GoM, 2006b) mentioned above. Education is one of the sub-themes under Social Development (theme 3). In addition to the goal on meeting the Millennium Development Goals on basic education, the MGDS has a goal for secondary education. This is to:

“provide the academic basis for gainful employment in the informal, private and public sectors; and at tertiary level, to produce high-quality professionals with relevant knowledge and skills in relevant fields” (GoM, 2006:50).

Its medium-term expected outcome on secondary education is “increased access and improved quality and relevant education for boys and girls including those with special needs” (ibid, page 51). In addition, on SNE, the MGDS broadly requires a conducive environment for the learning of pupils with disabilities. Thus partly due to the influence of the social model and ISFs of education and disability, the MGDS recognises the importance of SNE and inclusion.

Text production process: SNE among other competing interests

Ball’s model contends that such a major policy document is often a result of various and sometimes competing interests. The MGDS was heavily influenced by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund as part of the country’s poverty reduction process. As stated in the document, the process to produce the MGDS involved a steering committee set up by Cabinet which translated the Government’s vision for Malawi into an operational strategy for the medium term. In turn, the steering committee set up a technical working group which spearheaded the development of the MGDS. The preparation of the MGDS involved two phases of consultation. The first phase was the internal Government discussions which led to the development of a framework for further consultations. Furthermore, the process involved a number of consultative meetings and workshops which were held with all stakeholders to solicit their input in the strategy. Representatives of people with disabilities contributed in the process.

The second phase of the consultation process involved the technical working groups with the MGDS review team. The findings of the comprehensive review of the

MGDS whose consultations sought feedback from civil society on its implementation were incorporated into the document. Furthermore, inputs from an integrated household survey, a demographic and health survey and a poverty vulnerability analysis were incorporated in the MGDS. Further consultations involved other stakeholders such as the executive, Parliament, the Judiciary, the private sector, civil society, donors, co-operating partners, and the general public, including people with disabilities. Though the consultations were implemented by government, the World Bank remained a driving force, with its agenda for macro-economic stability and growth remaining overarching goals.

(e) National Educational Sector Plan –NESP (MoEVT, 2006)

In the same year that the MGDS was completed, Malawi developed a National Education Sector Plan.

Nature and purpose of text: an attempt at greater SNE-specificity

The National Educational Sector Plan (NESP) was formulated to cover the period 2006-2015. The NESP is a ten-year planning framework that is specific to the education sector. The NESP was to be in line with a sector-wide approach to the delivery of services.

The NESP is structured around three main goals:

- (i) expansion of equitable access to education to enable all to benefit;

- (ii) improvement of quality and relevance of education to reduce drop-out and repetition and promote effective learning; and
- (iii) improvement of governance and management of the system to enable more effective and efficient delivery of services.

The issues of gender, poverty, SNE, HIV and AIDS have been reflected as integral for the plan (MoEVT, 2006). The NESP recognises the fact that special and diverse needs of pupils with disabilities have not yet been consistently analysed and catered for (section xiii, page 8). Section xv further identifies the challenges faced by Malawi in better understanding the scale and degree of SNE in the education system due to lack of data. The NESP then requires that every mainstream activity should be responsive to SNE through physical infrastructure improvement, teacher-training and attitudinal social campaign. Further, the NESP recognises that secondary schools are not often within easy access for most pupils (section 3.2.1, page 16). It therefore advocates for an increase of boarding secondary schools as a major intervention which will assist poorer pupils including those with disabilities access secondary education (MoEVT, 2006).

Text production process: continuation of the participative approach

The NESP was developed over a period of four years. Its sources were other policy texts: Vision 2020, MGDS, EPIF, Education for All National Plan of Action and other policies. In addition, supplementary surveys, field visits, workshops, and meetings were conducted for this policy. Some of the people involved in its

formulation were from Ministry officials at central, divisional and district levels. There were also representatives of schools, community, and civil society.

5.4.3 Policy texts for SNE

The trend increased the adoption of inclusion and SNE is more exemplified in policy texts that are specifically on disability. In addition to the broad policy texts on development and education, Malawi has policies specific on disability.

(a) National Disability Policy - NDP (2001)

Nature and purpose of text: clarity in embracing the values of inclusion

The NDP mirrors the values of inclusion and the need to deliver SNE in an inclusive manner. As stated in the document, the National Disability Policy (NDP) was developed because the Government operated without a NDP for a long time. This resulted in lack of sound direction for all stakeholders who tried to address the disability issues in Malawi. The NDP was also developed to guide the provision of SNE.

The NDP deals with definitions on disability. Accessibility is defined as, “easy availability to all; capability to be seen and/or used by all regardless of economic, social, physical or other limitations” (MRPDE, 2001:2). Equalisation of opportunities is viewed as “a process through which the various systems of society and the environment are made available and accessible to all citizens” (ibid: 2). SNE

is viewed as “a system for providing a conducive environment for learners who may not benefit much from the regular education system” (ibid: 2).

The NDP sets out its goal to:

“integrate fully people with disabilities in all aspects of life thereby equalize their opportunities in order to enhance their dignity and well being so that they have essentials of life” (MRPDE, 2001, p. 11).

The NDP recognizes disability as a cross-cutting issue. It also views disability as a human-rights and development issue. As a human-rights issue, the NDP recognises that “to compete favourably, people with disabilities should have equal access to education, training, employment, health and other aspects of life” (MRPDE, 2001:9). On the other hand, as human development issue, the NDP recognises that,

“People with disabilities live in abject poverty. In light of government’s poverty reduction policy, the challenge is to develop strategies to empower people with disabilities and reduce their poverty so that they can be self-reliant and contribute towards national development” (MRPDE, 2001, p. 9).

The NDP identifies its twelve priority policy areas. These are prevention, early identification and intervention; rehabilitation; accessibility; transport; information and communication; education and training; employment; social welfare and social protection; self-representation and participation; sports, recreation and entertainment; housing and research and appropriate technology.

The NDP underlines:

“Equalisation of opportunities, abilities and capabilities of people with disabilities to live and participate fully as other persons in society” (MRPDE, 2001, p. 12).

On education and training, the set objective is to “ensure equal access and inclusion of people with disabilities in education and training programmes” (MRPDE, 2001, p. 12).

The NDP’s strategies to achieve its objective reflect the content of the UN Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (UN, 1993). It relates to policy, tool development and implementation. With regard to the development of other policies, the NDP advocates for the promotion and support of IE. The policy requires the following actions:

- (i) Research in special education;
- (ii) The review and reform of the national curriculum and examination systems to include the needs of learners with disabilities;
- (iii) The design and development of appropriate assistive technologies, devices and teaching and learning materials for the education of pupils with disabilities;
- (iv) The development of appropriate communication systems for such pupils;
- (v) The incorporation of SNE in teacher-training curriculum;
- (vi) The training of specialist educators for pupils with disabilities;
- (vii) The development of appropriate teaching methods and mechanisms; and

- (viii) The establishment of resource centres in schools for SNE throughout the country.

The NDP recognizes environmental, institutional, attitudinal and economic barriers which people with disabilities encounter in life. However, it does not propose the strategies to address them. This is a gap which this study attempts to address.

The NDP recognises the importance of striving for the implementation of its goal with plans envisaged for short, medium and long terms taking into consideration the country's socio-economic status. It therefore opted for coordination with the existing and new policies and legislation in different areas that impact on people with disabilities (MRPDE, 2001). At the same time, the NDP recognises that the substantial amount of financial and material resources will be needed for its successful implementation. It also encourages the utilisation of the existing and available resources and facilities as this is the most cost-effective way of policy implementation. The NDP revitalised the National Coordinating Committee on Disability Issues (NACCODI) which is under the MRPDE. The key roles and responsibilities of the committee according to the document are to:

- Coordinate policy and implementation;
- Ensure the availability and commitment of resources;
- Negotiate key performance indicator with all role players; and
- Ensure effective reporting and monitoring.

Text production process: participation informed by the social model

The text production of this policy document was very well informed by the social model. The document has numerous references to social model-based international frameworks. For example, the document states that, the UN Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (UN, 1993) influenced the development of the NDP. The NDP also drew from the Constitutional and United Nations provisions and declarations on disability.

Further to that, the development process involved the “broad-based bottom up consultative process” (MRPDE, 2001, p. 5). This commenced with the formulation of the core team which reviewed the literature and came up with the working document. The consultative process involved individual interviews, focus group discussions, three regional and one national consultative workshop. The process involved people with disabilities, government officials, key stakeholders that included various development agencies, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations, the private sector, and development partners.

(b) National Policy on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities -NPEOPD (MRPDE, 2006)

The Government of Malawi has further specifically developed policy framework that have specifically responded to ISFs. The NPEOPD is a good illustration of this point.

Nature and purpose of text: an attempt to make equalisation of opportunities prominent

The National Policy on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (NPEOPD) was developed to cover the period 2006-2011. It was developed in response to the Government's commitment to international and national standards and frameworks to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities are met.

As stated in the document, the NPEOPD is based on the aspirations of the UN Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities (UN, 1993). At national level, the NPEOPD is based on the aspirations of the Constitution of Malawi, the Government's Vision 2020, MGDS, EPIF, the Handicapped Persons Act, and the National Special Needs Education Policy (2006 draft). Thus by including the Handicapped Person's Act and the UN Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities as one of its bases, the NPEOPD embraces both the medical and social model of disability.

Repeating the definitions in the NDP, the NPEOPD (section 3.2) sets out the country's vision on the welfare of people with disabilities as "Malawi becoming a nation where people with disabilities have equal opportunities to participate in various undertakings and realize their potentials and goals in life" (MRPDE, 2006, p. 8).

The NPEOPD mission statement (Section 3.2) expressly refers to the inclusion of people with disabilities in the following terms:

"To promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities at all levels of society through the creation of an enabling environment for the respect of human

diversity, human-rights and the development of all human potential” (MRPDE, 2006, p. 8).

The policy identifies thirteen specific priority areas that need to be mainstreamed by Ministries, Departments and Local Assemblies as follows: prevention; early identification and intervention; rehabilitation; accessibility; transport; information and communication; education and training; economic empowerment; social welfare and social protection; self-representation and participation; sports, recreation and entertainment; housing; research and appropriate technology; and HIV and AIDS (MRPDE, 2006). This study focuses on education as one of the thirteen priorities that the policy identifies. With regard to education and training, the NPEOPD’s objective is to “promote equal access and inclusion of persons with disabilities in education and training programmes” (Page 15).

The policy sets out three specific duties for the MoE namely to:

- facilitate adequate access by persons with disabilities to quality; education and ample opportunities to develop their skills;
- promote inclusive education and training programmes; and
- establish the Malawi Institute of Special Education.

Thus the promotion of IE is identified as a specific duty for the MoE. The NPEOPD makes it clear that its foundation is within the social model. It identifies barriers to IE as environmental, institutional, attitudinal and economic barriers that prevent them from participating fully in and being included in the mainstream of society. It

further argues that the problem of disability has more to do with the lack of responsiveness from the state and society towards disability as opposed to the impairment itself (MRPDE, 2006).

The NPEOPD has an implementation action plan that outlines specific time-frames subject to periodic review and monitoring and evaluation. Further, the policy underlines the need to mobilise requisite resources in collaboration with local and international development partners to enable the implementation of the goals, objectives and strategies contained in the policy (MRPDE, 2006, Foreward section, Para. 4, Page, iv).

The NPEOPD is clearly both focused on equalisation and a fair attempt to have local structures and frameworks that can carry the agenda into action and realisation. Its drawback is its weakness to leverage resources in view of the MGDS and other IMF and World Bank-driven local frameworks.

Text production process: continual inclusive participative process

The development process of the NPEOPD involved consultations with relevant key stakeholders in the public and private sectors. These included people with disabilities (MRPDE, 2006).

(c) National Special Needs Education Policy -NSNEP (MoE, 2007)

Nature and purpose of text: SNE in line with international frameworks

The National Special Needs Education Policy (NSNEP) represents the Malawi Government's attempt to have a specific policy on SNE, influenced by the social model and ISFs on disability and SNE. One aim was to reflect the government's commitment to ISFs, and the increased growing human-rights culture in the country. Before this, the Government acknowledged operating without clear guidelines and procedures for the procurement and allocation of specialised resources to institutions that serviced pupils with SNE.

As a framework, the NSNEP underlines community awareness and participation, mainstreaming of SNE issues, standardisation of the implementation of SNE, effective partnership and coordination, and equitable allocation of resources.

The NSNEP (Section 1.2.2) identifies the needs of pupils with SNE that will enable them successfully to enrol and participate in IE. These include conducive learning environment; modified infrastructure; advocacy; modified teaching; learning and assessment resources; qualified specialist teachers; trained teachers; specialised assistive devices; adequate resource centres; and regular medical checks-ups.

The challenges/barriers to learning and participation faced by pupils' with SNE that the NSNEP identifies include negative attitudes by the community, lack of specialist teachers and resource centres, shortage of specialised teaching, learning resources and assistive devices, and inaccessible infrastructures and information. Section 1.5 identifies policy implementation challenges as financial constraints; environmental barriers; attitudinal barriers; limited capacity to train specialist personnel;

irresponsive curriculum; institutional structure; and co-ordination and partnership. This indicates that the NSNEP recognises the constraints of inclusion in the context of practice.

The NSNEP then sets out its vision in the following terms: “to have persons with special educational needs receive adequate education to enable them to effectively contribute in social and economic development of the country” (Section 2.1).

The expressed mission is “to provide access to quality and relevant education to all learners with special educational needs in Malawi for their survival, growth and development” (section 2.2). Its goal is stated as to “develop the personal social and academic competences of learners with special educational needs” (Section 2.3).

There is no specific objective on secondary education. Nevertheless, the NSNEP aims to ensure quality education equitable access to all education levels and support for all learners with SNE. Further objectives are improved co-ordination and efficient provision of SNE services.

The NSNEP’s stated principles reflect the values of IE. Thus in addition to requiring decentralised delivery of services, accountability, transparency and sector-wide approach, the policy underlines non-discrimination.

The NSNEP identifies eight focus areas. On each, it provides strategies that stakeholders have to follow within a holistic approach in the education sector. The first priority area relates to assessment, identification and placement. The purpose of this priority area is to identify the education needs of children in order to make a

placement in an appropriate school. To this end, the policy calls for the development of guidelines, screening tools, and SNE data bank, provision of psychological services in schools, education resources and assessment centres, and recruitment of psychologists, counsellors, and other professionals.

The second focus area for the policy is advocacy. The reason for such a focus is to change the mind-set of the public and encourage pupils with disabilities to attend school. The strategies for advocacy are participation in media and other public awareness campaigns and encouraging parents who have children with disabilities to send their children to school, and the involvement of people with disabilities in advocacy as role models.

The third focus area for the policy is care and support. The rationale to focus on care and support is stated as to facilitate the teaching and learning process. Prescribed strategies are equipping parents and primary care-givers with knowledge and skills on care, provision of psychological care for children with disabilities, and provision of sporting and recreational facilities for such children, and the development of needs to govern the protection of children with disabilities.

The fourth focus area relates to planning, management, and financing. The reason is to ensure proper delivery of SNE services. Strategies on this are the development of a strategic plan and legislation on SNE, decentralised delivery of SNE services, a data bank on SNE, and improved conditions for specialist teachers and other related services. The policy goes further to suggest that 5% of the national budget should be allocated to SNE.

The fifth focus area is to increase access to education for children with SNE. On this, the policy prescribes numerous strategies. The provision of services is disaggregated by categories of disabilities. Thus learners with HI are to benefit from the provision of sign language services. Learners that are deaf-blind are to benefit from tactile language services while those with VI should access Braille facilities. Learners with communication difficulties are to benefit from the provision of augmentation communication. Staff-wise, the policy requires that enough specialist teachers, Braillists, sign language interpreters, and learning support assistants. For all learners with SNE, there should be a bursary scheme for the needy, counselling and guidance, dietary supplement, and chemotherapy where appropriate. Libraries and resource centres that have appropriate instructional materials and sensitive devices are to be established and maintained in both private and public learning institutions. HIV and Aids information should be available. The policy further states that teacher-training courses for both primary and secondary education should be mandatory.

The sixth focus area is quality education to ensure that the education of pupils with SNE access is of good quality. In this regard, the policy requires that trainers of teachers for SNE should have at least a master's degree. There should be continuous professional development of teachers on SNE. The policy envisions the deployment of adequate trained teachers, an SNE supervisory system and logistics on the distribution of materials for specialised teaching and learning.

The seventh focus area required by the policy is to ensure that there is equity in the teaching and learning system. Selection of secondary schools must be based on affirmative action in favour of pupils with disabilities. There should be gender parity

in the selection of SNE trainees, much as there should be increased enrolment of pupils with disabilities. The policy further requires that the distribution of resource centres, learning materials, support systems, staff, and schools should all be characterised by equity.

The last focus area is to ensure that the education of pupils with disabilities is relevant for them and the environment in which they live. In this regard, the policy calls for an alternative curriculum for pupils who cannot access the regular curriculum. Educational programmes for pupils with disabilities are to be oriented towards their entry into the labour market. Examinations (including in secondary schools) should be duly adapted for pupils with disabilities, much as there should be relevant teaching, learning, and assessment materials. Sporting facilities and activities have to be disability-friendly.

The NSNEP, hence, does not only recognise the values of inclusion, but also adopts some of the strategies and methods specified in ISFs.

Text production process: inclusive process informed by principles of inclusion

The development of the NSNEP (MoEVT, 2007) went through several processes. At the international level, the key document used to formulate the NSNEP were the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), EFA (UN, 2000), UN Millennium Development Goals (UN, 2000), and UN Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, in particular Rule 6 (UN, 1993).

At the national level, the key documents used to formulate the NSNEP were the Education Act (GoM, 1962), the Handicapped Persons Act (GoM, 1972), the Constitution of Malawi (GoM, 1994), the NEFA Policy (MoEVT, 2002), the EPIF (MoEVT, 2005), the MGDS (GoM, 2006), and the NPEOPD (MRPDE, 2006). By linking with the Handicapped Persons Act, the NSNEP reflects both the medical and social models of disability. However, it is clear that this approach was informed by the interactionist perspectives, rather than the need to comply with an existing statute, the Handicapped Persons Act.

The text further highlights that its development underwent a series of consultations with the participation of different categories of stakeholders such as parents, students, government officials, and non-government organizations, members of the civil society, the media, local leaders, politicians, and development partners. It is pertinent to underline that the leadership within the MoEVT was provided by the Deputy Director for the Directorate of SNE who himself is a person with disabilities.

5.5 *Discussion*

The assessments of the policy texts provide insights not only on the context of text production, but also on the contexts of influence and practice. The nature of the policy texts augment one point that was drawn from the discussion based on the responses of the *élite* in Chapter 4.

5.5.1 The Context of Influence

The formulation of legislation and policies on SNE and IE shows a progression from the medical model of disability to the social model and the influence of ISFs. For example, there was no evidence of the inclusion of people with disabilities and disability interests in the formulation of the Education Act in 1962. Ten years later, in 1972, coinciding with dominance of the medical model of disability, the Handicapped Persons Act reflected that model without much participation from those representing the interests of people with disabilities. In contrast, the Constitution of Malawi, passed twelve years after the Handicapped Persons Act, in 1994, was inclusive in its formulation and has remained so in its reviews. Such a trend was to continue during the formulation of Vision 2020 (GoM, 1999), the NDP (MRPDE, 2001), the NEFA (MoEVT, 2002), the EPIF (MoEVT, 2002), the MGDS (GoM, 2006), the NESP (MoEVT, 2006), the NPEOPD (MRPDE, 2006), and the NSNEP (MoEVT, 2007). The influence into these policies partly came from those who represented the interests of people with disabilities, including people with disabilities.

The finding from the élites in Chapter 4, that the influence of ISFs has increased and remains big is validated by the Constitution and policies developed after 1994. The Constitution refers to the need for Malawi to respect international standards. The 2007 NSPEP specifically refers to ISFs on disability and SNE. When the 2006 Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities was adopted, Malawi signed it and is a party to it. This is another example of the continuing influence of international standards on Malawi's context of influence.

The post-1994 policy texts show no inherent contestation against the influence of ISFs. The major challenge for policy-makers is, however, to attempt to localise and implement the standards in ISFs. However, it is also possible to notice the tensions created by policy priority set by the World Bank and the IMF for macro-economic stability. Rose (2003, p.67) argues,

“world bank operations have continuously been influenced by economic considerations which determine the activities of a bank. Although tensions between its different activities as a development agency on one hand and a bank on the other hand are evident, it is undeniable that the World Bank has played, and continues to play, a catalytic role in determining and reinforcing a particular development agenda”.

Hence, the education policy reflects the dominance of the World Bank in setting the development agenda (Ibid). Thus the 2006 MGDS, which is the overarching policy framework and the EPIF, are not as strong on inclusion and SNE as the 2007 NSPEP. This validates the finding in Chapter 4 that any contestations against ISFs have emanated not within those in education policy-decision making but rather from the broader national level competition for prioritisation for resources allocation.

Despite the increasing reflection and focus on IE in the chronology of Malawi's development policies, the analysis of the texts reveals continuing gaps. There is still no legislation that reflects IE, as the governing legislative framework is still the out-of-date Education Act and the medical model-based Handicapped Persons Act 1972. Although the Constitution is clear on the importance of addressing the needs of

people with disabilities, it is merely a framework for more focused legislation, which has not been passed.

Other gap areas in the policy texts are those that were also noted from the discussion of the responses of the élites in Chapter 4. These include the lack of training strategy and the inability to leverage resources for IE.

5.5.2 The Context of Text Production

The progression towards the social model and the requirements of ISFs is also reflected in the content of legislative and policy texts. From no reflection of the interests of people with disabilities in the Education Act 1962, through the reflection of the social model in the Handicapped Persons Act 1972, to the 1994 Constitution, the trend is a greater reflection of the social model and ISFs on disability is evidenced in the Constitution's emphasis on non-discrimination, a requirement that policies should be responsive to the needs of people with disabilities, and the content of the right to development in section 30. Indeed, that section groups people with disabilities among people whose realisation of the right to development has to be a priority, such as women, and children.

With time, the emphasis on inclusion and IE has increased, so far culminating in the 2007 NSNEP. More than any policy about inclusion in Malawi, the NSNEP recognises the principles of inclusion, raises the issues of equal access to education, equity, quality and relevance, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It is cognisant of policy implementation challenges and accordingly attempts to provide

guidelines towards accessible, quality and relevance of education for learners with SNE. In line with the requirements of inclusion, it requires that its implementation should be participatory, to involve schools, communities, practitioners, and policy-makers. In this sense, this policy impliedly recognises the importance of the interfaces between the contexts of influence and those of text production and practices.

The NSNEP, however, as the policies on education and SE before it, do not seem to have reflected how the two key questions that problematise inclusion in the context of the countries of the South could be addressed: how to leverage resources for IE and whether inclusion is the most effective method to deliver SNE. Although IE is meant to be cost-effective, the NSNEP is subject to the overarching MGDS, which does not specify SNE or IE as a priority. In this sense, the target set by section 30 of the Constitution, remains to be met. Regarding the effectiveness of IE as an SNE strategy, the NSNEP has not addressed the question as to how to take into account the pupil's within learning factors. As the interactionist model is yet to be influential in Malawi, it is not surprising that some élites in Chapter 4 insisted that the policy should probably have reflected the provision of the separate education of those with profound or multiple disabilities.

In addition, in Malawi's context, the MSNEP and the policies before it, do not address the imbalance for SNE in primary and secondary schools. Although it addresses challenges envisaged for the implementation of SNE in general, the MSNEP does not address the specific challenges that could be secondary school-specific.

5.5.3 The Context of Practice

Although there is not much evidence that the post-1994 policies benefited from the experiences of people with disabilities, these policies attempted to benefit from the experiences of people who work in the context of practice. Teachers participated at least in the formulation of the NSNEP. Indeed, the NSNEP notes and attempts to address challenges existing or envisaged in the context of practice.

Although the policy is meant to influence the context of practice, it assumes that the MoEVT can satisfactorily respond to SNE in the context of practice. By so doing, the NSNEP fails to take into account practice-generated solutions and strategies. It may be that its localised strategies that may work within the current resource constraints and dominance of macro-economic stability policies within which the policy is located. Its insistence that its implementation has to involve communities and schools falls short of giving sufficient autonomy to school committees, parents and teacher associations to come up with innovative ways to deal with school-specific challenges.

5.6 Conclusion

The influence of ISFs and the social model of disability is manifested in Malawi's post-1994 policy texts. The goodwill to implement IE in Malawi's schools is reflected in those texts, with competing priorities emerging as the contestation against IE. In this regard, the helplessness on those in the SE policy of influence as

noted in Chapter 4 is clear when the more specific policies on SNE are examined within the overarching MGDS and the cost-cutting EPIF.

With time, the policy texts on inclusion and education have manifested greater desire to realise the standards in international frameworks. This has culminated in the SNE-specific NSNEP which attempted to address challenges in the context of practice. As noted from the responses of the élites in Chapter 4, there is no doubt that this and other policies on inclusion have brought benefits in Malawi. However, the NSNEP and its complementary policies have not addressed four crucial issues for the implementation of IE in Malawi. One relates to problems of inclusion in countries of the South: leverage of resources. The second problem is that it does not address the diverse need of all pupils in inclusive secondary schools. The remaining two problems relate to a Malawi-specific situation. These are, firstly, the historic lack of equality in the delivery of SNE between primary school and secondary school education. Secondly, the policies have not addressed the need to have a strategy on training in SNE to meet the needs in Malawi's secondary schools.

Chapter Six presents interprets and discusses the findings from the teachers' survey questionnaire in the context of practice.

CHAPTER 6: CONTEXT OF PRACTICE: INCLUSION AND TEACHERS' OPINIONS AND EXPERIENCES

6.1 *Introduction*

Chapters Four and Five employed qualitative data analysis to provide an overview of the policy-to-practice contexts, based on *élites'* interviews and policy texts. This chapter presents, interprets, and discusses the findings from the questionnaires received from 139 teachers in the context of practice from the sampled 17 secondary schools that included pupils with disabilities.

The teachers “have a rich and diverse source of knowledge about the current practices, issues and challenges” (Stubbs, 2009, p. 35). ‘SNE teachers’, ‘special teachers’ and ‘specialist teachers’ will be used interchangeably to reflect the responses. The broad themes from the research questions and emerging themes and issues from the analysed data are discussed and conclusions drawn.

6.2 *Aims*

The overall aim of the small-scale survey of teachers in selected secondary schools was to capture the overview of teachers' opinions, views and experiences about the inclusion of pupils with disabilities in Malawi's secondary schools.

6.3 *Methods*

The study used a questionnaire to collect evidence from the sampled teachers. The questionnaire was intended to collect wide ranging-information about: the teachers' background and characteristics, their views on IE; their experiences and perceptions; their overall teaching contexts; and recommendations on how to improve the delivery of IE.

6.3.1 The Participants

The total sample for the survey was 200 teachers, purposefully selected from inclusive secondary schools in urban, urban-rural (peri-urban), and rural areas of Malawi's three geographical and political regions: Northern, Central and Southern Regions. The sample represented a range of types of teachers' characteristics in terms of age, sex, educational qualifications, positions, and numbers of classes they taught.

6.3.2 Materials

The questionnaire (which is included in Appendix 3), with both fixed-closed and open-ended questions, was developed in consultation with the researcher's supervisor, a professor of education, and also guided by theory, practice and other research. The closed questions included fixed choices (1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 2.1, 3.1, 4.2, 4.4a, 4.4b, 4.5a, 4.5b, 4.6a, 4.7c) and opinion ratings (1.8, 2.1, 3.1, 4.4d, 4.5d, 4.6b, 4.7a, 4.9c).

Open-ended questions (3.2, 4.3a, 4.4b, 4.4c, 4.4c, 4.4e, 4.5c, 4.5e, 4.5d, 4.6c, 4.7b, 4.8a, 4.8b, 4.9a, 4.9b, 4.9d, 4.10a, 4.10b) allowed the participants the opportunity to provide more than one response. This was to allow in-depth understanding of the issues. Cohen et al (2000) observe that open-ended questions allow the participants to write free responses using their own words to explain. Such questions, they add, avoid the limitations of pre-set categories of responses.

The questionnaire addressed the research questions in relation to the contexts of influence, policy text production and practice.

The questionnaire was piloted before the actual study, in order to increase its clarity, reliability, validity (Cohen et al, 2000) and practicability. The pilot was with a sample of 5 teachers who were teaching in inclusive secondary schools. There were no emerging issues following the pilot study in relation to the questionnaire.

6.3.3 Procedure

The researcher visited 17 secondary schools currently educating pupils with disabilities at the beginning of their first school term in January, 2007. The purpose and importance of the study was explained to headteachers in these schools. Consent was obtained to distribute the questionnaires to teachers whose classes had pupils with disabilities.

The headteachers for the 17 schools agreed to distribute the questionnaires to the teachers. The headteachers then explained the purpose and importance of the study

to the teachers and obtained their consent to respond to the questionnaires. The head teachers collected the completed questionnaires from the teachers and then further followed up on teachers who did not respond. The researcher collected the completed questionnaires from the headteachers. The collection of the completed questionnaires was finalised in March, 2007 because some teachers took time to return the questionnaires to the headteachers and still some did not return the questionnaires.

6.3.4 Data analysis

A data audit trail was kept by numbering each returned questionnaire. The responses from fixed responses and ratings were assigned codes. The coded data were entered into SPSS 17.0 spread sheet for analysis. Thus each variable was entered into the SPSS separately for analysis.

With regard to the 'open' questions, the data were analysed thematically, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) a step by step guide as described in methodology Chapter Three. This was the case with Questions 2.2b, 3.4b, 3.4d, 3.5c, 3.5d, 3.5e, 3.6c, 3.7b, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3b, 6.1, and 6.2. Appendix 4 shows a sample of data analysis. However, as pointed out by Robson (2002), this was not an easy exercise as it was mainly driven by the nature of responses as well as the themes and dimensions they suggested. Furthermore, the challenge of qualitative analysis lies "in making sense of the massive amount of data" (Patton, 2002:432) which was accumulated by the questionnaires.

6.4 Findings

Out of the distributed 200 questionnaires, 139 (69.5%) were returned. Some teachers did not respond to some of the questions within the time expected. The returned 139 questionnaires were sufficient to proceed with the analysis of the data.

The findings are presented in five sections. The first is a description of the profile (demographic background) of the sampled teachers. The second section presents the findings related to teachers' perceptions about the context of influence. The third section presents the findings related to teachers' perceptions about the context of text production. The fourth section presents the findings related to teachers' perceptions about the context of practice. The fifth section is the discussion of the findings.

The findings are presented in various formats, graphically and textually using both a number of a priori themes from the research questions and the emerging themes and issues that arose from the analysed data. The responses are presented in order of frequency in the interest of clarity. With the qualitative data from the questionnaires, the findings are presented thematically.

6.4.1 Section 1: The profile of the sample

Section 1 of the questionnaire explored the profile of the sample. The profile of the sample provides the characteristics of the selected inclusive secondary schools, teachers, and pupils with disabilities.

The surveyed inclusive secondary schools

The 17 surveyed inclusive secondary schools were day and boarding secondary schools and were either girls only (2 secondary schools) or boys and girls schools (15 secondary schools). Thirteen were government-owned, 2 government-aided, and 2 were private secondary schools. They were located in the urban (7), rural (2), and urban-rural [peri-urban] (8) areas in all the three Regions of Malawi: Northern, Central and Southern. The schools are represented by numbers for the interest of anonymity and confidentiality. The choice of the schools and their locations therefore offered a maximum variation sample of the other schools. These schools are represented in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Sampled Secondary Schools

Sampled Secondary schools (represented by numbers)	Nature of Secondary School	Location\Region of Malawi
1	Government boarding-mixed	Urban area, Southern Region
2	Government boarding-mixed	Urban-rural area (peri-urban) Central Region
3	Government day-mixed	Urban, Northern Region
4	Government Aided Missionary school-boarding-girls only	Urban-rural area (peri-urban), Northern Region
5	Government boarding- girls only	Urban area, Central Region
6	Government boarding-mixed	Urban area, Southern Region
7	Government boarding- mixed	Rural area, Southern Region
8	Government boarding-mixed	Urban-rural area (peri-urban) Southern Region
9	Private day-mixed	Urban-rural area (peri-urban), Northern Region
10	Government boarding- mixed	Urban-rural area (peri-urban), Southern Region
11	Government boarding-mixed	Urban-rural area (peri-urban),

		Southern Region
12	Private-mixed	Urban area, Central Region
13	Government aided boarding-girls only	Urban, Southern Region
14	Government boarding-mixed	Urban-rural area (peri-urban), Southern Region
15	Government boarding-mixed	Urban-rural area (peri-urban) Southern Region
16	Government boarding-mixed	Urban area, Southern Region
17	Government day-mixed	Rural area, Central Region

Teachers by gender

There was a gender imbalance among the teachers in the surveyed secondary schools. The findings indicate that the majority of teachers, 66.9% were males, whilst only 33.1% were female teachers. This reflects the overall distribution of teachers by sex in the country's secondary schools which is male dominated.

Teachers by age group

There was a wide range of age groups in the surveyed secondary schools, with only 5.8% of the teachers being over 50 years old, whilst 43.2% were in the age group of 30-39. Those who indicated that they were in the age group of 40-49 constituted 27.3%. A further 23.7% were in the age group of 20-29. Taken together, 69.9% of the teachers in the sampled schools were aged below 40.

Teachers' positions

The teachers were asked to indicate the positions that they held in their respective schools. The sampled teachers held a wide range of positions. The questionnaire included options for headteacher, deputy headteacher, generalist form teacher, subject teacher (teachers specialised in a particular subject) and 'other' category. Teachers provided one or more than one response, indicating multiple roles. Each variable was entered separately into the SPSS spread sheet for analysis.

Of the 139 teachers, a majority, 95 indicated that they were subject teachers. Forty-one indicated that they were class teachers. Only 14 teachers held the position of SNE teachers. A further 8 teachers stated that they were headteachers, whilst 7 indicated that they held the position of deputy headteachers. This suggests that there were very few SNE teachers in the surveyed secondary schools.

Of the 139 teachers, 10 indicated that they held 'other' positions such as "*Head of department*" (5), "*Boarding-master*" (4) and "*Deputy Head of department*" (1). Table 6.2 presents the summary of the positions the teachers held, as indicated in their responses but will not add up to 139 because they gave more than one response.

Table 6.2: Teachers' positions

Current position	Frequency
Subject teacher	95
Form teacher	41
Specialist teachers (SNE teachers)	14
Head teacher	8
Deputy head teacher	7
<i>Teachers' other specified positions</i>	

<i>"Head of department" (i.e. Head of Home Economics department)</i>	5
<i>"Boarding master"</i>	4
<i>"Deputy head of department"</i>	1

The number of classes taught by the teachers

Of the 139 teachers, a majority, 59.7% indicated that they taught in two classes, compared to 20.1% who indicated that they only taught in single classes. A further 13.7% of the teachers taught in three classes. Some 6.5% stated that they taught in as many as four classes. A majority of the teachers therefore had a teaching responsibility of more than one class. This suggests that the teachers' experiences are likely to be influenced by interactions with multiple classes.

Teachers' qualifications

The teachers were asked to indicate the qualifications that they held. The sampled teachers held a wide range of qualifications. The questionnaire included options for Degree in Education, General Degree, and Degree in SNE, Master's in Education Degree, General Masters Degree, and Diploma in Education, General Diploma, and Diploma in SNE, Certificate in Education, Certificate in SNE, General Certificate and 'other'. Teachers provided one or more than one response. Each variable was entered separately into the SPSS spread sheet for analysis and the total number of the frequencies represented in Table 6.3 will therefore not add up to 139.

Very few teachers had qualifications in SNE. Of the 139 sampled teachers, one indicated holding a Degree in SNE; another one held a Diploma in SNE and, 19 indicated holding a Certificate in SNE. None held a Master's degree in SNE. A further 45 indicated that they held a Diploma in Education and 43 held a Degree in Education. Twenty-two teachers stated that they held a Certificate in Education whilst 6 held a General Degree and 4 held a general Master's Degree. Furthermore, 4 indicated that they held a General Diploma in Education and 2 stated that they held a Master's Degree in Education. These data are represented in Table 6.3 below:

Table 6.3: Sampled Teachers' Qualifications

Current qualification	Frequency
Diploma in Education	45
Degree in Education	43
Certificate in Education	22
Certificate in Special Needs Education	19
General Degree	6
General Master's Degree	4
General Diploma	4
General Certificate	4
Master's in Education Degree	2
Degree in Special Needs Education	1
Diploma in Special Needs Education	1
Other specified qualifications	
<i>Malawi Secondary Certificate of Education (MSCE)</i>	3
<i>Bachelor of Theology</i>	1
<i>Bachelor of Science in Agriculture</i>	1
<i>French Teaching</i>	1
<i>Diploma in Liberal Arts and Social Sciences</i>	1
<i>Advanced Certificate in Accounting</i>	1

As shown in Table 6.3, the proportion of teachers who held a Diploma in Education was slightly different from those who held a Degree in Education. However, the findings suggest that a majority of the teachers went through general training in educational theory, pedagogy and methods but there would have been no inclusion

of SNE in the teacher education programme. Mostly those who held qualification in SNE were primary school teachers who had been attached to inclusive secondary schools as SNE teachers. Their responsibility was to support pupils with disabilities and their teachers.

The teachers were further asked to indicate ‘other’ if some of the qualifications they held were not among the options. Only eight teachers chose ‘other’. Three stated that they held a “*Bachelor of Theology*”. The other 5 teachers respectively held a “*Bachelor of Science in Agriculture*”, “*Malawi Secondary Certificate of Education*”, “*French Teaching*”, a “*Diploma in Liberal Arts and Social Sciences*”, and “*Advanced Certificate in Accounting*”.

Teachers’ additional training and qualifications in SNE

The surveyed teachers were asked to indicate additional training/qualifications in SNE that they had received. Of the 139 teachers, 24 stated that they had gone through additional SNE in-service training, 15 indicated that they had additional qualification which was a Certificate in SNE whilst 6 stated that they went through some additional SNE short course.

The teachers were further asked to choose ‘other’ if the additional training/qualification they held was not among the given options. Thus of the 139 teachers, 5 indicated that they went through “*life skills education*” training. One out of 139 teachers stated that she/he was “*trained to teach students who were selected for Malawi Special Teacher Education Programme*” (MSTEP). This suggests that

not many teachers had additional training and qualification in SNE. Table 6.4 represents these data.

Table 6.4 Teachers' received additional training/qualifications

Additional training and qualifications	Frequency
In-service training	24
Certificate	15
Short course	6
Other specified additional training/qualifications	
<i>Life skills education</i>	5
<i>Trained to teach Malawi Special Teacher Education Programme (MSTEP)</i>	1

Teachers' opinion of the training they went through

Forty-three out of the 139 teachers offered a view on training. Of the 43 teachers who responded, over half, 26 found the training on SNE satisfactory and 13 found it very satisfactory. Only 4 found the training they went through not very satisfactory. This suggests that if available on a wider scale, such training could be welcomed by the teachers.

The range of pupils' age group the teachers taught

The teachers were asked to indicate the range of age groups of the pupils with disabilities they taught. The teachers provided one or more than one response.

The range of age group of pupils teachers taught in Malawi's secondary schools is varied according to the respondents (83 out of 139 teachers). The findings suggest

that a majority of teachers, 83, taught the pupils who were in the range of age group between 14-16 and a further 75 teachers taught pupils who were in the range of age group between 17-19. Some teachers, 20, indicated 11-13 and this suggests these pupils did 6 years of their primary education. Such pupils would be from private primary schools. However, some teachers, 23, reported teaching pupils whose range of age group was 20-22. This suggests that these pupils would be either late starters, repeaters, or both as described in page 22.

6.4.2 Section 2: Teachers and context of influence: the influence of international standards/frameworks (ISFs)

The survey sought teachers' opinions on the extent to which ISFs had influenced inclusion policy and practice in Malawi's secondary schools. One hundred and thirty-three teachers responded to this question. Thus, 33.1% indicated that ISFs had been influential and 8.4% indicated very influential. However, 42.9% indicated that ISFs had not been very influential and 3.8% indicated not at all influential. On the other hand, 12% indicated that they did not know whether ISFs had been influential. The data therefore shows teachers' mixed opinions about the influence of ISFs on inclusion policy and practice in Malawi.

The teachers were further asked through an open-ended question, to say more about their answers. These data were analysed thematically to qualify why the teachers indicated that ISFs had been 'not very influential', 'influential', 'don't know', 'very influential' and 'not at all influential'.

Elaboration about teachers' opinion that ISFs were 'very influential'

Eight out of 11 teachers who indicated that ISFs had been very influential on inclusion policy and practice provided not more than one reason for holding such an opinion. Their common elaborations about their opinion related first to: **access to education** as indicated by 3 teachers. One stated that, *"Many students with disabilities have accessed education"*. Another one observed that, *"Currently pupils with disabilities are being incorporated in conventional secondary schools as a result of policy of inclusion"*. One more expressed that, *"Schools are being encouraged to accommodate the disabled students through these international frameworks"*.

These statements indicate that there was some appreciation among teachers regarding the influence of ISFs on policy of inclusion and practice as many pupils with disabilities accessed secondary education.

Second, there was some **provision of learning resources**, as indicated by a further 2 teachers. For example, one stated that there was a *"provision of talking computers by Scottish Government"* and another one explained that *"Talking computers have been donated to assist the visually impaired students"*.

Elaboration about teachers' opinion that ISFs were 'influential'

Of the 44 teachers who indicated that ISFs had been just influential, 27 provided the explanations for holding such an opinion, giving more than one response. Their main

explanations related to **access to education** for pupils with disabilities as indicated by 15 teachers. One stated that, *“We see more pupils with disabilities in schools and there is an improvement in support from government”*. Another one added that, *“Due to this policy, all pupils with disabilities are selected to schools where there is inclusion”*.

The rest of elaborations related to the provision of teaching and learning materials/resources (4) and financial and material support (3) among others.

Elaboration about teachers’ opinion that they ‘did not know’

Of the 16 teachers who indicated that they did not know whether ISFs had been influential on inclusion policy and practice, 8 provided more than one explanation for holding such an opinion.

The main explanation related to **lack of knowledge about ISFs**. This was indicated by 6 teachers. For example, one stated that, *“I have no knowledge about the international frameworks/standards on education of children with disabilities”*. Another one expressed that, *“I have never heard of such standards”*. The rest of the teachers’ explanations related to lack of participation in policy formulation and evaluation, and teachers’ desire that pupils’ needs should be taken into account.

Elaboration about teachers’ opinion that ISFs were ‘not very influential’

Of the 57 teachers who thought that ISFs on inclusion had not been very influential on inclusion policy and practice, 44 provided their explanations for their opinion some providing more than one response. Their explanations largely related to first, **lack of training in SNE** as indicated by 14 teachers. One teacher explained that, *"The Government has really allocated special students to normal schools but most of the teachers are not trained to teach special needs students"*. Another teacher complained that *"Teachers are denied of having education/training as to how they can handle the disabled students"*.

The second was **inadequacy and lack of specialist teachers in SNE** as indicated by 13 teachers. One indicated that, *"There are few specialised teachers who can handle such pupils hence not effective"*. Another one specified *"Lack of personnel (teachers) in SNE"*.

The third was **infrastructural and facilities problems** as indicated by 12 teachers. One stated that, *"In most schools there isn't improvement of infrastructure to accommodate/suit the disabled"*. Another one expressed that, *"Up to this day several education facilities are not yet designed to cater for our disabled friends"*.

The fourth was **inadequacy and lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials/resources** as indicated by 9 teachers. One stated that, *"Not all schools have necessary materials for these pupils only a few"*. Another one pointed out that, *"There isn't much implementation due to lack of suitable resources in centres where the disabled get their education"*.

The fifth was that **not much has been done in secondary schools** as indicated by 8 teachers. One indicated that, *“There is much talk and seminars held on such standards but very little work is done on the ground”*. Another one explained, *“There is a lot of concentration on special education in the primary school and very little in secondary schools, shown by the training of special education teachers who are mostly primary school teachers”*.

The sixth was **lack of knowledge about ISFs** as indicated by 4. One stated that, *“Very few know and it’s only in urban areas but in rural areas this is not the case”*. Another one pointed out that, *“The policy is very silent on education for disabilities”*.

Other explanations given by the teachers related to exclusion, misunderstandings about inclusion, lack of effective influence from Government, lack of participation, inappropriate curriculum design, lack of incentives for teachers, and the fact that pupils with disabilities were few.

These themes indicate that much as policy goals may have been influential by the social model and ISFs, capacity has to be developed in terms of human resources, teaching and learning materials, and appropriate infrastructural activities.

Elaboration about teachers’ opinion that ISFs were ‘not at all influential’

Of the 5 teachers who indicated that ISFs had not at all been influential on inclusion policy and practice, 2 provided more than one explanation for holding such an opinion. One pointed out, *“Lack of adequate materials, lack of adequate teachers in SNE”*. Another one stated that *“Most teachers in secondary schools do not know how to assist special needs learners”*. One teacher further indicated that, *“The learners have no idea where and how to seek help”*.

6.4.3 Section 3: Teachers and the context of text production: responsiveness to pupil diversity

The teachers were invited to comment on the responsiveness of policy texts to respecting diversity among pupils.

Teachers’ opinions/views about the value of diversity

The surveyed teachers were first asked to indicate their opinions/views about the need for the inclusion policy to be designed and educational programmes implemented in response to the wide diversity of pupils’ learning needs as required by ISFs. Of the 134 teachers who responded, a majority 67.2% strongly agreed and 29.1% just agreed with the importance of diversity in education. However, 2.2% of the teachers disagreed and 0.7% strongly disagreed. One teacher (0.7%) did not know. The findings suggest that a majority, 96.3% agreed with the importance of diversity in education.

6.4.4 Section 4: Teachers and the context of practice: interpretation and implementation of inclusion policy

Teachers were invited to indicate their perceptions/views on the implementation of IE policy in the country.

SNE encountered by teachers

To understand the types of SNE encountered in the sampled schools, the teachers were asked to list the types of SNE they encountered as teachers. Teachers provided more than one response. The frequencies therefore do not add up to 139.

Of the 139 teachers, 74 indicated that they encountered sensory impairment-visual, 62 encountered sensory impairment-hearing, 61 encountered speech and language difficulty and 59 indicated that they encountered physical impairment. A further 47 encountered moderate learning difficulties, 27 stated that they encountered moderate behavioural difficulties, 23 encountered language and communication difficulty and 22 encountered epilepsy. Only 6 stated that they encountered dyslexia. None of the teachers indicated 'other' encountered SEN, which was not among the options given.

The most encountered SNE by the teachers was VI. This was followed by HI, SLD, and PI. The least encountered SNE was dyslexia.

However, although sensory impairment is the most common form of disability, the diversity in learning needs entails that some teachers have to handle more than one form of learning needs.

Teachers' reported significant changes in the types of SNE and in the number of pupils

Teachers were invited to indicate whether there had been any significant changes in the types of SNE encountered and in the number of pupils with disabilities enrolled for the previous few years prior to this study. Of the 122 teachers who responded, a majority 68.9% reported that there had not been significant changes while the remaining 31.1% indicated that there had been significant changes.

Pupil with disability case study

The teachers were asked to think of one pupil with disabilities that they had taught in the last few years, prior to this study, to represent a typical experience. The findings under this subsection are therefore related to the pupil for each teacher who responded.

(a) Teachers' reported description of pupils with SEN

Sixty-eight teachers described the pupils with SNE that they taught. Amongst those who responded, there was confirmation that teachers taught pupils with a variety of

SNE, with VI as the most prevalent. This was indicated by 30 teachers. Eighteen teachers indicated that they taught pupils with HI. Thirteen teachers indicated that they taught pupils with LCD, whilst 7 teachers indicated teaching pupils with PI.

(b) Level of pupils' assessed needs

Teachers were invited to assess the levels of pupils' needs. Only 40 teachers provided the level of the pupils' needs. Just over half, 21 of those who responded, thought that the level of pupils' assessed needs was very high. Thirteen teachers considered that the level of assessed needs was moderate, whilst 6 teachers characterised the level of pupils' assessed needs as low. This indicates mixed assessment which suggests that the teachers' ability and experience may not be uniform.

(c) Teachers' reported identified outside school support received by pupils with disabilities

Forty-seven teachers reported as to whether pupils with disabilities received any other outside school support. A majority, 29, teachers who responded indicated that outside school support was received. The 18 remaining teachers reported that such pupils did not receive any other outside school support.

(d) Support when preparing to receive these pupils

(i) Teachers' indication of received support when preparing to receive pupils with disabilities

In order to determine whether the teachers received support when preparing to receive these pupils, the teachers were invited to choose among given options and also to indicate 'other' if that type of support was not among the options. Some provided one or more than one response.

Of the 139 teachers, 35 indicated that they received support in the form of discussions with SNE teachers. Twenty-nine indicated receiving support in the form of meetings with parents while 23 stated that they had discussions with previous teachers. A further 23 indicated support about preparation of special materials while 16 stated that they had access to documents/records of pupils with disabilities. Furthermore, 12 indicated having access to appropriate literature while 11 stated that they had discussions with people from the Montfort schools for VI, HI and LD.

These data indicate that parents and SNE teachers were the two groups of people most teachers seemed to depend on for support. Overall, there was little support related to the actual teaching.

(ii) Teachers' indication of any other received support before they received the pupils with disabilities

Of the 99 teachers who responded on whether they received any other support before receiving the pupil with disability, 85 reported not receiving any such support. This indicates that few teachers had support before receiving the pupils with disabilities.

The teachers were further invited to specify the type of support that they received. Among the 14 who indicated receiving support, the most common form of support was **the provision of teaching and learning materials/resources**, as specified by 8 teachers. For instance, one specified *“Braille books, radio cassette players, and blank tapes.”* Another stated that *“Computers were installed for embossing learning materials-print.”* It is noteworthy though that the positive experiences were with regard to hearing and visual-related learning needs, and not learning needs that teachers encounter.

(iii) Teachers’ opinion of the level of the preparation of accessed support

The survey showed mixed opinions among the teachers regarding the level of the preparation of support they were able to access. Of the 72 teachers who responded, 29 found the level of support that they accessed as either poor (18) or very poor (11), compared to the 21 who found the support either very good (4) or good (17). However, 22 teachers found the level of accessed support adequate.

Such mixed opinion on experiences among the teachers, as 43 teachers found the level of the preparation of accessed support adequate to very good and 29 found it poor to very poor.

When asked to detail any other two preparations they had found useful, only 31 out of 72 teachers who gave their opinions responded, providing one or more than one response. **Teaching and learning materials/resources** stood out as the most common preparation they had found useful, as indicated by 15. One mentioned the *“provision of Braille books and recorded lessons”*. Another one singled out the *“installation of computers for the specialist teacher”*. The second appreciated form of support was **extra classes/lessons** as indicated by a further 6 teachers. One specified having *“special lessons after classes to try to fill gaps encountered during learning.”*

The rest of the modes of preparation that the teachers found useful related to assessment, provision of hearing aids, training, discussion with SNE teachers and subject teachers among others.

(iv) Received forms of support and the opinion of the level of support

The respondents were further invited to indicate the forms of support they received and whether the received support related to all pupils with SNE or one-to-one teaching and whether such support was received from full-time or part-time specialists for VI, HI and LD. Each teacher who responded provided one or more than one response. Table 6.8 below presents these data.

Table 6.5: Classroom support received by the teachers

Type of classroom support received by teachers	Frequency			
	Full-time Support		Part-time Support	
	All pupils with SNE together	One-to-one pupils with SNE	All pupils with SNE together	One-to-one pupils with SNE
Specialist teacher support for VI	22	4	1	1
Specialist teacher support for HI	7	2	2	6
Specialist teacher support for LD	8	1	2	3
Other professional support in the classroom	3	-	-	-

Thus, there was more reported full-time specialist support in the classroom for all pupils with SNE than there was part-time support for all pupils with SNE and one-to-one. This full-time support was more for all pupils with VI, as indicated by 22 teachers. Only 3 teachers indicated ‘other’ professional support in the classroom. Two teachers stated that *“the pupil receives extra time during exams.”*

(v) Teachers’ opinion of the level of support received during teaching time

The unevenness of support to teachers among secondary schools was further apparent when 65 of the surveyed teachers gave their opinions on the level of support received during teaching time. Thirty-six teachers found the level of support very good to adequate whilst 29 found the level of support during teaching time poor to very poor. Such a mixed picture in the experiences of teachers in their appreciation of support, indicate the variations of levels of capacity and support in the context of practice.

(vi) Teachers' elaboration about support being 'very good'

In addition, the sampled teachers were asked to elaborate on their opinions. All the 5 teachers who thought that the level of support was very good elaborated on their opinions. The main reason was about the **pupils' achievement**, as indicated by 2 teachers. One stated that, *"They (pupils) were able to pass tests and exams after being helped which shows that friends are really contributing"*. Another one said that, *"Because he managed to pass some subjects at JCE level like Biology, Agriculture, English and Social Studies"*.

The rest of the teachers mentioned pupils' participation, teachers' competency and successful treatment.

(vii) Elaboration about support being 'good'

Of the 11 teachers who thought that the level of support received during teaching time was good, 10 elaborated on their opinion. The two commonly given elaborations related first, to: **special attention given to pupils**, as indicated by 2 teachers. One indicated that, *"The regular teacher could stand close to the pupil to ensure that the pupil was attentive"*. Another one stated that, *"The student was given special attention, i.e. group activities, got his own appropriate books"*. The second reason related to **teachers' acquired skills** as indicated by 2 teachers. One explained that, *"It assisted in enabling me to handle the pupil"*. Another one stated that, *"I was highlighted on different ways on how to handle a student with hearing impaired. This forced me not to neglect this student but always to think of her and ways on how to teach her"*.

The rest of the reasons related to pupils' ability to catch up with materials; cooperative teachers; pupils' improved performance; behavioural change and support in the form of Brailled exams and exercises.

(viii) Elaborations about support being 'adequate'

When asked for elaborations on their opinion, of the 20 teachers who thought that the level of support received during teaching time was adequate, only 8 elaborated on such an opinion. The main basis for their opinion related: first to some **success** of the level of support teachers were given during teaching time, as indicated by 7 teachers. One stated that, *"I was able to communicate after receiving that support"*. Another said that, *"I could always tell that she is satisfied or happy with the work covered on that day, if any problems she could come back for further explanations"*. One more observed that the *"Girl could answer question as lesson went on"*. However, one felt that, *"More could be done to have their practice exercises notes, portions of books etc brailled"*.

(ix) Elaboration about support being 'poor'

Of the 18 teachers who thought that the level of support received during teaching time was poor, 15 provided elaborations on such an opinion. The main elaborations related to: first, **inadequacy and lack of specialist teachers**, as indicated by 4 teachers. One pointed out that, *"The number of deaf students is too big against one specialist teacher to provide support in all subjects"*. Another one explained that,

“No special need specialist teacher could come during my teachings to interpret the teachings (especially diagrams to the visually impaired students)”.

The second basis for the reason was about **lack of training in SNE**, as indicated by 3 teachers. One stated that, *“Most teachers are not trained for special needs children”*. Another one stated that, *“I handled the student with the little knowledge I had, this might not be enough”*.

The rest of the elaborations related to inadequacy and lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials (2), lack of support (2), that private schools were not yet known as offering services, and inadequate attention and teachers.

(x) Elaboration about support regarded as ‘very poor’

Of the 11 teachers who thought that the level of support received during teaching time was very poor, 10 provided the reasons for such opinion. The main explanation related to **lack of support**, as indicated by 6 teachers. One stated that, *“I felt very sorry as no relevant support was rendered hence making my handling of the pupil very ineffective”*.

The rest of the explanations related to lack of training in SNE, lack of assistance for pupils with HI, and inadequacy of equipment.

(xi) Teachers' desired support during teaching time

The teachers were invited to indicate two 'other' forms of support which they thought could have been useful during teaching time. Only 53 responded, with each providing one or more than one response. The most common forms of support that the teachers desired was, first, **the provision of teaching and learning materials/resources** as indicated by 29 teachers. For example, one indicated the *"Provision of teaching and learning aids in Braille for the student to use since it was difficult for him to draw"*. Another one indicated, *"Procurement of suitable teaching and learning aids for disabled"*. One more indicated that, *"There is need for overhead projectors. This will enable the teacher to assist the student fully"*.

The second was **support from SNE teachers**, as indicated by 14 teachers. For example, one stated that, *"Specialist teachers should also explain some important points that they may have missed as sometimes they may be slow"*. Another one expressed that, *"Specialist teachers should help during experiments for visual impaired students"*. One more specified that, *"The full time specialist teacher should be there to dictate to the pupil on notes as well as exercises"*.

The third was **training and orientation in SNE**, as indicated by 10 teachers. For example, one teacher stated that, *"Teachers are supposed to get training before handling these students especially the deaf"*. Another one expressed that, *"I would suggest that the specialist be trained as an interpreter and translator through sign language so that the deaf should understand concepts during learning"*. One more specified *"Orientation on how to incorporate them during lessons"*.

The fourth was the **use of sign language and interpreting services**, as indicated by 9 teachers. Four specified *“using signs so that communication between the teacher and the pupil should be there”*. Two indicated *“the use of interpreter- those who are able to understand sign language”*.

The rest of the desired support related to provision of extra-time (4), individual support (3), clarifications of points and contents among others (3).

(xii) Teachers’ indication of support received by the pupils with disabilities outside the classroom

The teachers’ indication of whether the pupils received support outside the classroom during lessons suggested that such support was uneven. Among the 83 who responded, 37 indicated that the pupils received support, whilst just over half, 46 indicated that the pupils received no support.

The 37 teachers who indicated that the pupils received support outside the classroom during lessons were invited to state the type of support received by the pupil. In terms of type of support received by the pupils, some teachers provided more than one response. The most commonly mentioned types of support were, first, **support from Montfort Schools, MACOHA and Government** (12). That support was in the forms of **hearing aids and assessment of hearing levels**. The other forms of support were teaching and learning materials/resources (8), financial and material support (7), remedial and extra teaching (6), support from other schools (5), and school fees (5).

(xiii) Teachers' indication of support received during non-teaching time

The teachers were invited to indicate the support that they received during non-teaching time in relation to the pupils with disabilities. The support received was in the forms of the activities that they carried out for the benefit of their pupils.

The following table indicates the support received in the form of the activities teachers carried out during non-teaching time for the benefit of the pupils. Thirty-six responded to the question.

Table 6.6: Teachers' activities with pupils with disabilities during non-teaching time

Teachers' activities with pupils with disabilities during non-teaching time	Frequency
Consultation with special teachers for VI, HI and LD	36
Preparation of materials for the pupils with disabilities	25
Consultation with pupils' parents and guardians	18
Consultation with the Montfort Schools for VI, HI and LD.	15

Thus consultation with specialist teachers for VI, HI and LD was undertaken by all the teachers who responded to the question.

The teachers were further asked to indicate 'other' activities if these were not among the given options. Eighteen responded, indicating extra-curricula activities that included *"cleaning the surrounding by sweeping, working in the garden and washing clothes"* and *"Sporting activities"*.

(xv) Teachers' opinion of the level of support received during non-teaching time

There was variation among the teachers who gave their opinions about the level of support they received during non-teaching time. Of the 55 teachers who responded, a combined response number of 34 felt that the level of support received was at least very good to adequate. A further combined response number of 12 thought that the level of support was poor to very poor. This indicates that most teachers who responded found the level of support received during non-teaching time at least adequate.

(xvi) Further forms of support during non-teaching time

When asked to give two further forms of support during non-teaching time that teachers could have found useful, 38 teachers out of 55 who provided their opinions responded. The commonly mentioned further forms of support which the teachers could have found useful were first, **training**, as indicated by 13 teachers. For example, one specified, *“Training to all teachers as to how they can help pupils with special needs”*. Another one indicated, *“The schools must find means of training teachers how to teach pupils with disabilities”* and one more stated, *“Having training especially in sign language”*.

The second was **support from specialist teachers**, as indicated by 9 teachers. For example, one stated that, *“The student could be assisted in using the Braille machine by specialist teachers”*. Another one expressed that, *“Specialist teachers should help*

them with some experiments previously done in class if they did not get it from a teacher in class”.

The third was the **provision of teaching and learning materials/resources** as indicated by 7 teachers. One stated that, *“Learning materials like books should be given to be used at home”* and another one mentioned the *“Provision of relevant text book for visually impaired students”*.

Other desired support mentioned were extra lessons/more time (5), recreation (4), transport (2), to encourage pupil-participation, deployment of adequate personnel, provision of support materials such as canes and glasses, pupils to be sent to special schools, financial support, work to be presented in time, provision of food, and ways of motivating the pupils with disabilities.

Teachers’ workload

The sampled teachers were invited to indicate the extent to which pupils with disabilities created an extra workload for them, highlight the two main types of the workload and choose from the given options the two most effective strategies that would help them with the extra workload association with SNE.

(a) Teachers’ indication of extra workload

When asked whether teaching pupils with disabilities created an extra workload 45.6% of the 103 teachers who responded indicated that pupils with disabilities created an extra workload for them significantly. A further 34% indicated that pupils

with disabilities created an extra workload for them to a minor extent. In contrast, 20.4% indicated that pupils with disabilities did not create an extra workload for them. Thus 79.6% indicated that such pupils created an extra workload for them.

(b) Teachers' indication of the two main nature of the workload

The teachers were asked to highlight the main nature of the extra workload created by pupils with disabilities. Sixty-four teachers responded providing one or more than one response. There were various types of the extra workload as perceived by the teachers. The commonly perceived nature of the extra workload related to: first, **preparation and duplication of teaching and learning materials**, as indicated by 34 teachers. For example, one indicated the *“Preparation of supplementary teaching and learning materials”*. Another one further stated that *“Some exercise is prepared twice i.e. for sighted and make it into Braille, while teaching the sighted you make sure that all the work you have prepared is also translated into Braille so that this follows the course of the lesson”*.

The second was **extra-time teaching/remedial work** as indicated by 23 teachers. For example, four indicated that, *“Others need extra time in lessons, exams”*. Another one specified, *“Arrangement of remedial lessons for visually impaired students”* and one more stated, *“I also have to teach the girls to use computers in the resource room”*.

The third was **moderation of work, as pupils needed more attention and slowing down in teaching**. This caused their work to accumulate as indicated by 19. For

example, one stated that, *“They have to be taught with a different approach from the normal ones”*. Another one expressed that, *“Much as all pupils need attention, but these need more attention to see to it that there is progress for them in terms of learning”*. One more explained that, *“They need either a slowdown in the teaching speed which will leave you with work to be done after the classes which is difficult”*.

Other teachers’ perceived nature of the extra workload created by pupils with disabilities related to pupils’ desire to have their own notes (4), answers and individual help (4), and transcribed work (4) among others.

(c) Teachers’ suggested strategies that would help them with the extra workload

The teachers were further asked to choose the two most effective strategies that would help them with the extra workload associated with SNE from given options and also to indicate ‘other’ strategies if they were not among the given options. The teachers responded providing one or more than one response.

As shown in Table 6.12, the most indicated strategies were more in-set/training in SNE as indicated by 64 teachers, increased allocation of time to plan with special teachers as indicated by 33 teachers and extra classroom support (29). Table 6.10 shows teachers’ indicated strategies.

Table 6.7: Teachers' indicated strategies that would help them with the extra workload

Teachers' indicated strategies	Frequency
More in-set/training in SNE	64
Increased allocated time to plan with specialist teachers	33
Extra classroom support	29
Increased allocated time to prepare materials	24
More opportunities to liaise with outside specialists	23
More dialogue with parents	14
<i>Other specified</i>	
<i>Extra time during tests and national exams</i>	1
Not specified activities	2

Experiences of teachers

The teachers were invited to state the three positive and three negative experiences in teaching pupils with disabilities in inclusive secondary schools.

(a) Teachers' reported positive experiences

Seventy teachers responded, providing at least one or more than one response. What emerged to be the three most commonly reported positive experiences related to: first, **pupils' eagerness to learn and hard working**, as indicated by 31 teachers. Seven stated that the pupils with disabilities were eager to learn. For example, one stated that, "*They are eager to learn but lack of specialist make them lose interest as*

they don't enjoy lessons". Five stated that pupils with disabilities were interested in learning. For example, one specified that, *"Students are more interested in learning"*. Another one added that *"They pay much more effort to know what they are being taught"*. Five indicated that pupils with disabilities were hard working.

The second reported positive experience was **teachers' teaching competence**, as indicated by 24 teachers. For example, one specified, *"Gained knowledge which can be used to communicate with other people of the same nature"*. Another one indicated, *"Acquired accommodative skills in that you try as much as possible to make sure that they too do understand what has been taught"*. One more added that inclusion *"Has helped me to understand the diversity that is there"*.

The third reported positive experience was **teachers' appreciation of pupils' good performance** as indicated by 24 teachers. For example, one stated that, *"They equally perform as well as normal pupils"*. Another one pointed out that, *"They perform highly in practical subjects"* and one more explained that, *"If well taught they do well more than the sighted"*.

Other reported positive experiences included pupils' ability to integrate and associate with others (6), teachers' feeling that it was rewarding and enjoyable to teach pupils with disabilities (6), pupils' participation (5) among others.

(b) Teachers' reported negative experiences

Seventy-two teachers indicated their negative experiences, providing one or more than one response. The most commonly perceived negative experiences of teachers in teaching pupils with disabilities related to: first, pupils' attributes. Some teachers (20) stated that pupils with disabilities were **slow learners**. Nine indicated that *"Most of them are slow learners"*. For example, one concluded that they are *"Slow in catching up with things as a result these slow us in teaching these classes"*.

The second negative experience for the teachers related to **difficulties handling the needs of various pupils with disabilities**, as indicated by 16 teachers. For example, one indicated that it is *"Difficult to assist pupils of different disabilities e.g. blind"*. Another one stated that, *"It is difficult sometimes to convince them whenever they are disappointed"*. One more mentioned *"Difficult to assess personal needs"*.

The third negative experience was about **inadequacy and lack of teaching and learning materials/resources** as indicated by 8 teachers. Seven indicated, *"Lack of teaching and learning materials in most schools"*. Another one added *"Inadequately provided for in learning materials"*.

Other reported negative experiences included lack of training (7), pupils being emotional (6), pupils' poor performance (6), lack of pupil participation (6) increased workload (6) among others.

(c) Positive and negative experiences of pupils with disabilities as reported by the teachers

The teachers were further asked to state the three positive and three negative experiences of pupils with disabilities in inclusive secondary schools.

(i) Positive experiences of pupils with disabilities as reported by the teachers

Sixty-three teachers reported the positive experiences of pupils with disabilities, providing one or more than one response. The most commonly reported positive experiences of pupils with disabilities in inclusive schools related to **pupils' feeling of being integrated, enjoyment of mixing and learning with others**. These were indicated by 27 teachers. For example, four stated that, *"They feel they are integrated into the school society"*. Four indicated that pupils enjoy mixing with others. Another four stated that, *"Pupils enjoy learning with others"*.

The second reported positive experience of pupils was **socialisation and interaction** as indicated by 18 teachers. For example, three stated that, *"They (pupils) have learnt to socialise with other student"*. Eight indicated that pupils interact with others. For instance one stated that, *"SNE pupils interact with the mainstream pupils"*.

The third positive experience related to pupils' **academic performance** as reported by 11 teachers. For example, one singled out *"Pupils' wonderful performance in class and extracurricular activities"*. Another one stated that, *"They are capable to do even better than anybody else"*.

The rest of the teachers' reported positive experiences of pupils with disabilities were pupils' self-confidence, self-esteem and feeling of importance (8), pupils' eagerness to learn and hard-working (8), peer support (5), valuing teachers who support and care for them(4), among others.

(iv) Negative experiences of pupils with disabilities as reported by teachers

The evidence of possible successful inclusion is, however, counterbalanced by evidence that the inclusion is being implemented amidst constraints. The teachers were also invited to indicate the three main negative experiences of pupils with disabilities in inclusive schools. Slightly more, 71 teachers responded providing one or more than one response. The most common negative experiences of pupils with disabilities as reported by the teachers were **isolation, neglect, marginalisation and sidelining**, as indicated by 15 teachers. For example, one stated that, "*Since they are sometimes confined in the resource room, they feel isolated*". Another one observed that, "*They are neglected by teachers who are untrained and can't think of how to help them*". One more stated that they are "*Marginalised*" and "*Normal pupils sometimes side line them*".

The second negative experience related to pupils' **lack of participation** as indicated by 10 teachers. One stated that pupils with disabilities "*Do not participate in other activities (denied access)*" and another one observed that, "*They are not asked questions in the classroom since they cannot speak*".

The third negative experience related to **inadequacy and lack of teaching and learning materials/resources**, as indicated by 9 teachers. One pointed out that, “*Not enough materials are provided for them*” and another one noted that, “*Absence of appropriate teaching and learning materials put them off*”.

The fourth negative experience related to **discrimination** as indicated by 9 teachers. One indicated that pupils with disabilities were “*Generally discriminated against by fellow students-keep themselves away*”. Another one added “*Discrimination by some sectors of the society*”.

Other perceived negative experiences of pupils with disabilities in inclusive schools related to marginalisation (7), lack of adequate assistance/help (7), being laughed at and mistreatment (6), suspicious minds/sensitive (6), communication problems (5) among others.

Teachers’ views of inclusion

In order to determine the advantages and disadvantages of inclusion, the teachers were invited to state the three main advantages and three main disadvantages of inclusion.

(a) The advantages of inclusion as reported by teachers

Eighty-three teachers provided the advantages of inclusion, giving one or more than one response. The most commonly reported advantages of inclusion related to,

socialisation/interaction and learning from each other as indicated by 41 teachers. For example, one explained that, the pupils with disabilities *“Are able to mix/socialise with others without disabilities, therefore not as isolated”*. Another one observed that, *“They interact with other normal pupils”*. One more explained that inclusion *“Gives disabled children a chance to learn from their fellow able pupils and vice versa”*.

The second advantage of inclusion was the **promotion of oneness**, as indicated by 19 teachers. For example, two stated that, *“It promotes oneness amongst the pupils”*. Another one explained that, *“It reduces segregation hence full interaction with the learning”*. One more stated that, *“They do not feel discriminated against from the normal ones”*.

The third advantage of inclusion was about **equal access to education and opportunities**, as indicated by 17 teachers. For example, one stated that inclusion *“Assist all children to learn together in the same way”*. Another one stated that inclusion provides *“Equal access to education”*. One more added, *“Providing equal opportunity to everyone to continue towards development”*.

Other reported advantages of inclusion were pupils’ feeling of part and parcel of the school or society and acceptance (9); peer support (8); pupils become self-reliant and empowered (7); and that it offers real life experiences (6) among others.

(b) Disadvantages of inclusion as reported by teachers

Eighty teachers responded to indicate the disadvantages of inclusion, providing one or more than one response. The most commonly reported disadvantages of inclusion were **inadequacy and lack of learning and teaching materials/resources**, as indicated by 10 teachers. For example, one stated that, *“Lack of resources makes it difficult for the students to learn”*. Another one expressed that, *“Practically inclusion is not possible where resources do not become available”*. One more pointed out that, *“Inclusion hinders the effort to assist the disabled separately since resources are not distributed widely”*.

The second disadvantage related to **inadequate assistance and lack of adequate support** as indicated by 8 teachers. For example, one explained that, *“They are not fully assisted as most teachers concentrate on finishing their syllabi so lack skills in handling these students”*. Another one expressed that, *“Most disabled pupils are not assisted to the best of their needs because regular teachers do not have experience in handling them”*. One more stated that, *“They are not given maximum support for conducive learning since teachers are not trained”*.

The third disadvantage of inclusion was about **limited and lack of participation**, as indicated by 8 teachers. For example, one singled out *“Lack of active participation since they are generally slow”*. Another one stated that, *“They are left unattended in subjects like maths, Biology where drawings are included”*. One more added that, *“Students’ participation is limited/restricted”*.

The fourth disadvantage of inclusion was that **pupils’ slow learning slows the teachers’ pace**, as indicated by 8 teachers. One pointed out that, *“Although learning*

the same materials, they are slow learners". Another one stated that they *"Slow teachers pace when it comes to explanation of certain concepts"*. One more expressed that, *"Sometimes teachers are made to slow their pace to assist the physically challenged"*.

Other reported disadvantages of inclusion were that pupils were not included in the learning process (7); were sidelined and neglected (6); and inadequate attention (5) among others.

Contribution to economic well-being

The teachers were asked to indicate whether they agreed with one often-expressed goal of inclusion: that by granting educational opportunities to children with disabilities, they are well-placed to lead productive lives and contribute to economic well-being.

Of the 139 teachers, 103 indicated their opinions. A majority of teachers with a combined response rate of 98% agreed with the often expressed goal of inclusion. Only 2 did not know (1%) or strongly disagreed (1%) with the view.

(a) Teachers' agreeing with the economic contribution of inclusion

The sampled teachers were further asked to elaborate on why they agreed that inclusion had positive economic benefits for the pupil and the economy as a whole.

(i) Elaborations about teachers' opinion of 'strongly agree'

Of the 81 teachers who strongly agreed with a view that educational opportunities for such pupils contributed to economic well-being, 62 elaborated on their answers. Thirty-seven teachers argued that **educational opportunities resulted in self-reliance and contribution to the economic well-being**. One indicated that, "*When educated they become self-reliant and help build the nation*". Another one explained that, "*As it is to every human being education enable people to fend for themselves*". One more gave an example that, "*We have a director in the Ministry of such calibre*".

The second reason for agreement was **academic achievement**, as indicated by 15 teachers. One pointed out that, "*If opportunities are given, many pupils are able to pass the MSCE with good grades*". Another one stated that, "*Since the evidence is there that they can even perform better than able students*". One more explained that, "*With all the necessary materials they can do well and reach higher education standards and get employed or do something of economic importance*".

The third reason for agreement, indicated by 11 teachers, was that **disability is not inability**. By this, they meant that having a disability does not mean that a person concerned cannot do anything. For example, one indicated that, "*Disabled pupils like other able ones are human beings with all potentials of becoming productive citizens in the society hence disability is not necessarily inability*". Another one stated that, "*Most of them have the potential just like any other child*".

(ii) Elaborations about teachers' opinion of 'agree'

Those who just agreed that educational opportunities for pupils with disabilities resulted in economic well-being provided the same reasons as those provided by those who strongly agreed with the view. Of the 20 teachers who just agreed, only 4 said more about their answers. The 4 teachers stated that **educational opportunities result in self-reliance**. One explained that: *"Education leads to earning money and being able to lead a stylish life and deliver the same to dependents"*. Another one pointed out that, *"Much of the help that they cannot get from other people, they will do on their own"*.

On the other hand, the two teachers who respectively indicated that they did not know or strongly disagreed with the view did not say more about their answers.

Barriers to learning and participation

The sampled teachers were invited to state the three main barriers to learning and participation faced by girls with disabilities and three faced by boys with disabilities in Malawi's inclusive secondary schools. They were further asked to suggest the strategies that could be employed to address such barriers.

(a) Barriers to learning and participation faced by girls with disabilities as reported by the teachers

Ninety-nine teachers reported the barriers to learning and participation faced by girls with disabilities in Malawi's inclusive secondary schools, providing one or more than one response. Ninety-four teachers provided the strategies to address such barriers providing one or more than one response.

According to the teachers, the most commonly reported barriers to learning and participation related to **inadequacy and lack of teaching and learning materials/resources**. This was indicated by 40 teachers. For example, five indicated *"Limited resources e.g. no Braille materials"*. Twenty-nine specified *"Lack of teaching and learning materials in schools"*. Another one added *"Lack of communicating aids"* and that *"In other schools there are no computers"*.

With regard to the strategies that would help to address inadequacy and lack of teaching and learning materials/resources as a barrier, 35 teachers responded. For example, fourteen suggested *"The provision of teaching and learning materials/resources"*. Two suggested that, *"The government should procure and provide more teaching and materials/resources"*. One suggested *"Increased funding"*. Another one suggested, *"Developing a policy on how these can be provided in the concerned schools"*. One more suggested *"Equipping them with special teaching and learning aids for proper understanding of concepts taught in class"*.

The second barrier was **lack of trained teachers in SNE** as indicated by 15 teachers. One indicated *"Lack of knowledge for teachers in dealing with special needs"*.

students". Another one stated that, *"Teachers lack symbol communication skills"*.

One more specified *"Lack of teaching skills by the regular teachers"*.

Fourteen made suggestions about the strategies that would help address such a barrier with training in SNE featuring high. Nine suggested *"Training of teachers in special needs education"*. Two suggested *"Organising in-service on special needs for teachers"*. One more suggested a *"Need for introduction of special education courses in teacher training colleges"*.

The third was **mobility difficulties**, indicated by 15 teachers. Four singled out *"Locomotion difficulties within the campus"*. One specified *"Movement difficulties from and back to their homes"*. Another one indicated *"Movement from changing classes"*.

Only 6 made suggestions about the strategies to address such a barrier. Their suggestions were improvement of infrastructure, placing pupils with disabilities in boarding schools and provision of wheel chairs. Two suggested *"Improving infrastructures, i.e. constructing pavements along door and corridor steps"*. Another two suggested that pupils with disabilities *"Should be at boarding school for easy movement"*. Two more suggested the *"Provision of wheelchairs"*.

The rest of the reported barriers included interaction problems/shyness (10); poverty (10); hearing difficulties/lack of hearing aids (10); lack of support (9); sexual harassment/abuse (8); discrimination (8); communication problems (7); paired/group work and taught alongside normal pupils (7).

It is of interest that many of the teachers who responded did not report gender as a most serious barrier for girls with disabilities, since “*sex inequality*”; “*gender: parents not willing to send them to school*”; and “*people feel they do need to be sent to school*” as barriers were reported by only 3 teachers respectively. Sexual harassment/abuse as a barrier was reported by 8 teachers. Furthermore, lack of school fees and English language as a medium of instruction were not even reported as barriers to learning and participation faced by girls with disabilities.

***(b) Barriers to learning and participation faced by boys with disabilities
as reported by the teachers***

Sixty-eight teachers reported the barriers to learning and participation faced by boys with disabilities in Malawi’s inclusive secondary schools providing one or more than one response. Sixty-three teachers suggested the strategies to address such barriers, providing one or more than one response. According to the teachers, the most commonly reported barriers to learning and participation related to **inadequacy and lack of teaching and learning materials/resources** as indicated by 24 teachers. For example, nineteen indicated “*Lack of teaching and learning materials in schools*”. Two added “*Inadequate Braille books*”. One singled out “*Lack of communicating aids*”. Another one indicated “*No computers for them*”.

The teachers’ suggested strategies to address such a barrier were the provision of teaching and learning materials/resources and increased funding as indicated by 21

teachers. Twelve suggested that, *"The Ministry should provide this"*. Three suggested the *"Production of more such books"*.

The second was **hearing problems and lack of hearing aids**, indicated by 11 teachers and this was mainly related to pupils with HI. One indicated *"Failure to hear what is being taught and communicates with teachers"*. Another one specified *"Lack of hearing aids"*. One more stated that, *"Can't hear what classmates are saying"*.

The teachers' suggested strategies to address such a barrier were placing the pupils with hearing problems into special schools, provision of hearing aids, training of teachers in sign language and training of other pupils so that they could communicate with them as indicated by 12 teachers. One teacher stated that, *"There should be a special school for them because it's totally impossible to think that they will benefit in an inclusive way"*. Two suggested *"providing them with hearing aids"*. One suggested *"Teachers to be freely trained in sign language so that at least each school should be disability user friendly"*. Another one suggested *"Teaching 'normal' students basic skills on how they can be conversing with these hearing impaired students"*.

The third was **mobility difficulties**, indicated by 7 teachers. Three indicated *"mobility problems"*. Two specified *"Locomotion difficulties within the compass"*. One added *"Lack of spare parts for wheel chairs"*.

The suggested strategies to address mobility difficulties were the improvement of infrastructures, provision of wheel chairs and placement of pupils into boarding schools as indicated by 7 teachers. Two suggested *“constructing pavements along door and corridor steps”*. One suggested *“Provision of wheel chair”*. Another one suggested that they *“Should be at a boarding school for easy movement”*.

The fourth was **lack of knowledge and skills in SNE** as indicated by 7 teachers. For instance, two indicated *“Lack of skills by the teachers teaching various students subjects in secondary schools”*. One indicated *“Untrained teachers”*. Another one singled out *“Lack of adequate communication skills on the part of teachers with respect to deaf/language”*.

The suggested strategies to address teachers' lack of knowledge and skills in SNE as a barrier, was training as indicated by 6 teachers. For example, one explained that, *“Government should train teachers in special needs education”*. Another one suggested that teachers should be up-graded.

Other reported barriers were communication problems (6); sight problems (6); inadequacy and lack of SNE teachers (6); and lack of support/care (6); stigma (5), and unfriendly/inaccessible infrastructure (5).

It is noteworthy that, just like for girls with disabilities, the respondents largely did not report gender as one of the overarching barriers for boys with disabilities for *“teachers giving more attention to girls”* as a barrier, was reported by one teacher.

The same with school fees, as one teacher reported “*delayed fee payment*” as a barrier. English language as a medium of instruction was not reported as a barrier.

6.5: Discussion

The teachers who responded to the questionnaire in this study provided an opportunity to augment or qualify the findings so far made from the literature review, the élite interviews, and the assessment and analysis of the policy texts.

6.5.1 Key Insights about the context of practice based on the sample

The secondary schools mirrored the variety of secondary schools that are available for pupils with disabilities in Malawi. The schools were predominantly urban and urban-rural (peri-urban) and very few in rural areas, reflecting Malawi’s uneven distribution of secondary schools in favour of urban and peri-urban areas. This suggests that pupils in rural areas are more likely to travel further than their urban or peri-urban counter-parts to access a secondary school. In most cases pupils with disabilities are housed in boarding secondary schools. Such students are therefore likely to be schooling far from their families, which are sources of support for both pupils with disability and teachers.

The 139 teachers who returned completed questionnaires overwhelmingly lacked training in SNE. The majority had a general training in educational theory, pedagogy and methods and had no knowledge and skills of handling pupils with disabilities.

This augments the findings from the *élite* responses in Chapter 4, that Malawi's IE system does not sufficiently have trained teachers in SNE at the secondary school level.

This finding further exemplifies the finding in both Chapters 4 and 5, that there is no effective strategy to address the training needs for Malawi's secondary school SNE. Low levels of sufficiently trained teachers for SNE have been noted in other countries of both the North and the South. Avramidis (2002), UNESCO (2002), Peters (2003), MacBeath et al (2006), and Winter (2006) noted a shortage in the countries of the North.

Eleweke and Rodda (2002) also noted such shortages in some countries of the South. In Malawi, however, this seems to be a historical problem, as teacher training in Malawi had for long not included SNE or IE until some Teacher Training Colleges started to include courses in SNE well after 2000. The only University College offering degrees in SNE, the Catholic University, opened only in 2006.

The teachers tended to hold multiple roles, teaching several classes, with some of them attending to administration matters. Their pupils were not just those within the official secondary school age range, 14-17 (MoEVT, 2008), but also included those that were well-below the age of 12 and some who were as old as 25. On this point, the sample reflected the mixed nature of enrolment in Malawi's schools. The 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008 National Education Statistics-NES (MoEVT, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008) indicated that there were some pupils who were under 12 years, and some were 12, 13, and 18 to 25 and even over 25 years in Malawi's

secondary schools. Such variety in roles for teacher and pupil ages entail that much versatility is required from the teacher delivering SNE in Malawi's schools.

6.5.2 Teachers' reported opinions of the context of influence

As with the élites, there was no contestation of the goals and values of inclusion among the teachers. Teachers agreed with the values and principles of inclusion, such as non-discrimination, participation and celebrating diversity. Indeed the overwhelming majority of the teachers who responded agreed with the rationale that education systems should be designed and education programmes implemented in response to the wide diversity of pupils' learning needs as required by ISFs. This reflects earlier studies on IE by Peters (2003, 2004), Boys (2005) and MacBeath et al (2006) in English schools that teachers supported beliefs in human-rights and the moral imperative not to discriminate on the basis of disability. This underlines the moral force of inclusion as a social value in both the contexts of influence and practice in Malawi.

The non-contestation of the value of IE by the teachers was despite that there was uneven and little knowledge of ISFs among the teachers. Many of the teachers who responded to the question about their knowledge of ISFs professed ignorance of such standards. This finding augments the observation from the responses of the élites in Chapter 4, that there was need for much training and sensitisation on the nature and content of inclusion and IE in Malawi. As some of the teachers did not appreciate the influence of ISFs, any such sensitisation may have to include the existence, nature, content, and influence of such standards.

6.5.3 Teachers' reported opinions of the context of text production

The findings in this Chapter indicate a general awareness of the essence of inclusion policy, but little understanding of the various or specific policy texts that should guide their work. The general knowledge may have emanated from the publicity that accompanies the processes of formulating such texts, such as news coverage on public and private radio stations and newspapers, workshops, directives from the MoEVT, and the participation of some teachers in the production process of the pertinent policy texts.

The teachers nevertheless showed a good appreciation of what should be expected as a result of policy texts on IE. A conclusion that can be made on policy text production is that there is some awareness and expectation in the context of practice that IE policy texts exist. The nature and content of such texts is not contested or a matter of attention for the teachers. This is because either many have not seen such policy texts or some agree with the publicised values and goals of such policies.

6.5.4 Experiences in the context of practice

The findings suggest that there is an expectation that pupils with disabilities will be included in mainstream secondary schools to enhance non-discrimination and participation. In as far as some of them noticed some of the goals of inclusion, such as the access of pupils to inclusive classrooms and appreciable attainment by some

of the pupils with disabilities; they appreciated the need for inclusion. However, in as far as there were inadequacy and lack of training in SNE, inadequacy and lack of teaching and learning resources, unfriendly learning environment among other perceived factors, some doubted any influence by ISFs on inclusion policy and practice in the country.

In day-to-day work with pupils with disabilities, there were varying reported experiences among the teachers, as indicated by illustrative case studies. Although VI was the commonest disability among the selected pupils with disability, there were also other forms of disability that the teachers encountered. These included HI, LD, and PI. Such variety of SNE in Malawi's secondary schools strongly suggests the need for a holistic approach to teacher training in SNE.

The discrepancies among and within schools were revealed sharply with regard to the human and material resources that teachers of pupils with disabilities receive or do not receive. In terms of human resources, it had already been noted that the number of teachers trained in SNE was insufficient. In addition, few teachers received support with regard to a pupil with disability. Support when preparing to receive a pupil with disability was available to some of those who responded to such a question. As they taught pupils with disability, some teachers received some support, mainly from SNE teachers when those were available. This reflects Eleweke and Rodda, (2002) and Abosi (1996) studies regarding other countries of the South, who concluded that support received by teachers of pupils with disabilities was insufficient. When received though, such support, especially, support from SNE teachers, was very well appreciated. This underlines the case for an implemented

strategy on initial and in-service training, but also mirrors one area where there is a huge technical gap in the delivery of IE in Malawi's secondary schools: technical support in SNE and how to handle a pupil with disability.

The teachers linked workload burdens with their perceived low capacities to deliver IE. When invited to highlight the two main types of the workload, the preparation and duplication of teaching and learning aids/materials and extra-time teaching/remedial work accounted for much of the workload. These findings mirror earlier studies elsewhere though in the context of the countries of the North. For instance, Boys (2005, p. 66) found that most teachers were apprehensive that IE would increase their workloads. Furthermore, MacBeath et al (2006) in their study on the cost of inclusion in English schools revealed that IE had workload-related impact on teachers. Where the teachers' technical capacities and the level of support are low, as is the case of Malawi, such workload burdens are exacerbated.

These factors relate to materials that must be provided or constraints that have to be addressed to implement IE, according to ISFs, such as the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UN, 2006). The fact that they were mentioned as barriers by the teachers signifies the amount of work that still has to be done to ensure that IE is effectively implemented.

Lack or shortage of teaching and learning materials/resources was also underlined as barrier to learning and participation for both boys and girls. For girls, other perceived barriers, according to the teachers, were shortage or lack of SNE teachers, interaction problems/shyness; poverty; hearing difficulties/lack of hearing aids; lack of support;

sexual harassment/abuse; discrimination; communication problems, paired/group work and taught alongside normal pupils. The barriers indicated as suffered by boys were similar to those perceived to be suffered by girls. However, further analysis of the results show that the number of responses for the barriers faced by girls with disabilities was higher than those for boys with disabilities, suggesting that girls may be facing more barriers as perceived by the teachers. Further, there were more barriers specified in relation to girls than those specified with regard to boys. There were also certain barriers that were noted only with regard to girls though with low response rates.

Despite such reported wide range of barriers, teachers desire to notice the benefits of inclusion were very common, strongly linking their appreciation of support and positive experiences with good results in IE and their own professional and technical development. Reasons for appreciation of received support related to better results for the pupils and gained knowledge and skills for the teachers. The teachers further appreciated pupils' with disabilities good attributes related to pupils' eagerness to learn, interest in learning and the pupils' hard-working nature. Others found their positive experiences when they gained the knowledge and skills of handling pupils with disabilities. Many indicated that their positive experiences were when their pupils with disability did well. Thus teachers in the context of practice are concerned about demonstrable learning outcomes and capacities to deliver IE more than merely including pupils with disabilities in classrooms. The quality of received support is therefore, for examples, evaluated from a functionalistic view point in terms of learning outcomes, on part of pupils, and the ability to deliver IE, on part of teachers.

In contrast, poor results of inclusion and lack of learning and teaching materials were strongly associated with poor appreciation of support and negative experiences. The sources of negative experiences for some teachers largely pertained to pupils' difficult or within learning attributes, such as slow learning and lacking the means to deliver IE, and frustration in not knowing how to work with some pupils with disabilities. For example, some teachers indicated that pupils with disabilities were slow learners and this resulted in slowing down of the teaching process.

The finding that some pupils may be slow in learning augments the scepticism by some of the *élites* that it was not probably feasible to handle the learning needs of pupils with profound or multiple learning needs in inclusive classrooms. In other words, there is an issue on whether much as inclusion within the school may be feasible, it is effective to implement it within a given classroom within the school.

This question underlines the problem on whether inclusion is effective in all cases, much as it might be efficient. If, as some of the teachers intimated, slow-learning pupils may slow the progress of the rest of the class, there is a further issue that has to be highlighted for IE: whether IE does not adversely affect the learning progress of pupils who are fast or average learners. From the responses of some of the teachers, it is clear that the pupils' within learning factors may necessitate separate learning groups or cohorts within the inclusive classroom. This, however, may result in discrimination and stigma, which is contrary to the values and goals of inclusion. The compromise position may be to accept inclusion within the school, but accept that learning may have to be on groups alongside learning abilities, which may avoid the formation of such groups according to disabilities.

Such a suggestion may be consistent with the finding that teachers thought that pupils with disabilities consider performing well as a positive experience, as opposed to being included per se. On their part, the teachers would like to teach effectively, especially where resources are scarce. Performing well was rated more as a perceived positive experience for the pupil with disability, when compared to other positive experiences such as feeling integrated.

In contrast, lack of evidence of the effectiveness of inclusion was largely associated with the reported negative experiences for the pupils, according to the teachers. Teachers, of course, highlighted other negative experiences for their pupils with disabilities. Those negative experiences were being isolated, neglected, marginalised and sidelined, lack of participation, and the learning environment. However, it was the deficiency of teaching and learning materials/resources that were most underlined. These are regarded as tools to effective teaching and learning.

With regard to school fees, language and communication, the surveyed teachers did not regard these as main barriers. Few teachers did not report communication as a barrier for girls or as a barrier for boys. One teacher reported school fees as a barrier for girls with disabilities. This is because school fees are seen as a general problem for all pupils.

Otherwise, inclusion was largely not contested in the context of practice, although there were still elements of discrimination. Nine teachers indicated that pupils with disabilities faced discrimination in some of the secondary schools sampled. This is not peculiar to Malawi, as MacBeath's (2006) made similar findings in some English

schools although in a different context. If some discrimination may still remain in inclusive schools, it may become worse where the pupils do not perform well. Performing well may actually cause other pupils to respect the pupil with disability, thereby countering discrimination and stigma.

6.6 Conclusion

Overall, the notion of inclusion and IE was not contested by teachers. Though not fully conversant with the tenets of inclusion, the teachers conceptualised inclusion in terms of adequate capacities to deliver education for all and the ability to get satisfactory learning and other outcomes. When such capacities and outcomes were absent, the teachers tried very hard to do the best for pupils with disabilities, whom they appreciated. When there were examples of such capacities and outcomes, such as satisfactory attainment for a pupil with disability, the teachers got motivated to continue with IE. Some of their pupils, in addition, were perceived as very diligent and motivated by the challenging environment that exists in many schools.

The linkage between the capacity to deliver IE and pupils' achievement appear very well understood by the teachers. Hence, the need for appropriate training in SNE and adequate teaching and learning materials as required capacity components for IE, are strongly recognised by the teachers.

The shortage of properly trained teachers contributed to the continuing struggle to realise IE in the context of practice where many were not aware of such standards and many significant obstacles still remained. At best, pupils with disabilities,

according to the teachers, were socially well integrated, but did not necessarily always benefit from the intended goals of IE, largely because the resourcing of IE was uneven and inadequate.

The shortage of properly trained teachers and the inadequacy of teaching and learning materials were regarded as so crucial to effective IE in a resource-poor context. What is not dispute, according to the findings, is that inclusion in schools is welcome and is attaining its social goals. Within the classroom, however, largely due to pupils' diverse characteristics and low capacities to handle the learning needs of both pupils with disability and those without disabilities, the effectiveness of IE was unsatisfactory. This may suggest the need to have separate learning groups based on learning abilities within the same classrooms. This may suggest that the solution to whether the social model and IE address both efficiency and effectiveness may depend on teaching methodologies, which in turn underlines the need for an implemented training strategy in Malawi's context.

The next chapter presents, interprets and discusses findings from classroom observations.

CHAPTER 7: CONTEXT OF PRACTICE: THE CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

7.1 Introduction

In line with its mixed methods approach, the study employed classroom observations, for indications of the experiences of pupils with disabilities and their teachers within the context of practice. The observations focussed on how the contexts of influence, represented by the values and goals of inclusion and as embedded in the policy texts were realised in practice.

This Chapter therefore reports, interprets, and discusses the findings from classroom observations.

7.2 Aims

The aims of the classroom observations were:

- Firstly, to establish whether the teachers' classroom practices were consistent with the reported views of practice revealed by survey; and
- Secondly, to determine the extent to which the goals and values of inclusion were realised for pupils within the context of classroom ethos, interactions and lesson delivery.

7.3 Methods

The researcher collected background information with a checklist and used structured and unstructured observations to collect evidence from the classroom sessions. The researcher took field notes against time-lines. Thus, a relevant event was recorded according to the time the lesson started and finished.

7.3.1 Participants

The sample was purposefully selected, as discussed in Chapter Three. The total sample for the study was 8 participants: 4 pupils with disabilities and their respective teachers in the selected secondary schools. Table 7.1 below shows the summary of the sample for the classroom observations. The teachers are presented by numbers (1-4) and the secondary schools are presented by alphabets (A-D), for confidentiality and anonymity reasons.

Table 7.1: Sample of the observed pupils with disabilities

Scenarios	Secondary school	Pupils' type of disability	Number of classroom observations	Date of Observations
1	A	Profound hearing impairment (PHI)	1	18/1/2007
2	B	Moderate learning difficulties (MLD)	1	23/1/2007

3	C	Profound visual impairment (PVI)	1	1/2/2007
4	D	Physical impairment (orthopaedic impairment)- PI	1	7/2/2007

Known performance of the observed pupils with disabilities

In order to gain an overview of academic performance of the observed pupils with disabilities, school reports were requested from the headteachers by the researcher and in three cases provided. There were no copies of school reports kept for the pupil with MLD in the school. Furthermore, it was not possible to examine the progress over two or three terms as there were only data for first term for the observed pupil with PHI. The grades did not pertain to the same subjects.

The relative performance of three pupils with disabilities (PHI, PVI and PI) for Term 1, using average grades shows that pupil with PI (60.5%) performed better than pupils with PVI (32.2%) and PHI (16.6%). This finding suggests that there can be wide discrepancies in performance for pupils with disabilities, with the pupil with PI performing well and the one with PHI failing badly.

7.3.2 Materials

The observations were recorded through field notes based on the delivery of the lessons and interactions that took place in the classrooms.

7.3.3 Procedures

The researcher visited the selected inclusive secondary schools at the beginning of their first school term. The purpose and importance of the study were explained to the headteachers of the schools and consent was obtained to carry out the observations. The headteachers then explained the purpose and importance of the study to the teachers and obtained their consent to be observed.

The teachers were informed that the observation would be done for an entire lesson period of forty minutes. In the classrooms, the teachers explained the purpose and importance of the study to the pupils and obtained their consent.

During the observations, the researcher took field notes against the time line (see Appendix 3), recording events from the beginning to the end. The researcher observed what went on during the delivery of the lessons, noting down every interaction that was targeting the pupils with disabilities. Recorded also was whether the interactions were initiated by the pupils or teachers; academic and social interactions; and whether there were any additional support in terms of specialist teachers, adapted teaching and learning materials, and modification of activities. The events enabled the researcher to establish the experiences of pupils with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. The researcher did not actively participate in the class activities during the observations.

A checklist was also completed that provided basic classroom contextual information. Permission to take photographs of the pupils with disabilities in the

classrooms and the physical environment outside the classrooms was sought. However, the photographs are not inserted in this thesis for reasons of confidentiality and anonymity.

7.3.4 Data analysis

The observation data were examined and analysed in much the same way as described for the interview data in Chapter Three. The data were analysed and coded according to the broad categories derived from the stated questions (a priori categories) and emergent themes from the analysed data. Furthermore, any additional themes, issues, and surprises that emerged from each lesson for each teacher enabled the researcher to make comparisons.

7.4 Findings

The findings are presented with limited discussion. The broad themes and issues from the findings form the basis for thick description, interpretation and in-depth discussion.

A brief description of the physical environment outside and inside the classrooms

First of all it is crucial to give a brief description of the physical environment outside and inside the classrooms of the schools as observed by the researcher guided by a checklist. The findings revealed that there was a common problem on physical accessibility. Many places in the four schools were not accessible to some pupils

with disabilities. For instance, there were no ramps around the school buildings and the geographical areas of the schools included some areas with uneven surfaces and had steps. At School 2, for example, access to the school buildings was steep for all the categories of disabilities even for those other pupils without disabilities. During the rainy season the access became slippery and that was observed during the visit. Of course, the school tried to make the surface of one area accessible but it was not friendly for pupils with disabilities. In fact, this posed problems to all pupils. At School 3, some classes were situated in the first floor and because of lack of lifts, it was difficult for those with disabilities to access those classes. It meant they had to rely on their friends for mobility all the time.

In terms of physical environment inside the classroom, the findings revealed that it was not responsive to the needs of pupils with disabilities. The door entrances were not all wide enough for wheel chairs and crutches at the four secondary schools. The classrooms at School 3 and 4 did not have sufficient space due to the size of the room and increased number of pupils. As a result, space was almost entirely taken up by the desks and chairs. The classroom at School 2 was more spacious because it was a new school. The researcher interpreted this to mean that the problem of large classes was taken into consideration when designing it. However, comparing School 3 and School 4 in terms of classroom space, School 3 had the least space. The room was small and there was not even enough space for the teacher to stand comfortably in front because of overcrowding. The movement around the room was therefore restricted.

7.4.1 Scenario 1

The observation was carried out on 8th January, 2007 in a mixed-sex inclusive boarding secondary school. The school was located in one of the rural-urban (peri-urban) area of the Southern Region of the country. The class started at 10:00 am and finished at 10:40 am. The teacher was teaching a Form 2 (Year 8) class which had two pupils with PHI in secondary school A. The class had a total of 36 pupils.

Lesson delivery through group work and a variety of other methods

The subject was English and the lesson was about 'parts of the eye'. The teacher started the lesson by quickly giving a recapitulation of what was covered in the previous lesson about the eye by asking pupils questions. This took four minutes. The teacher then introduced the day's lesson on the 'Parts of the eye'. He retrieved pupils' prior knowledge of the parts of the eye by asking them to mention some parts of the eye which they knew. This took approximately six minutes. He later asked the pupils to go into groups of four and five to read the passage about 'Superior sight' and identify the words which could be used to label the parts of the eye in ten minutes. The pupils were told that after the discussions, the representative of each group should present their work by labelling the diagram of the eye on the chalkboard and they were given five minutes to do that. After the group discussions, the teacher carried on with the teaching on the same topic. This took ten minutes. The teacher used the last minutes to conclude the lesson by asking the pupils what was covered in the lesson. The teacher then asked the pupils to submit their group work for marking and dismissed the class.

The teacher used a variety of approaches in delivering the lesson. These included whole class teaching, small group discussions, and questions and answers. He used teaching and learning visual aids such as posters, which showed the different parts of the eye and text books distributed to the pupils to read. The teacher had a lesson plan but did not include how he was going to involve the pupils with PHI in all the class activities.

Responsiveness to learning needs and the level of participation

The researcher observed that during the recapitulation of the previous lesson, the observed pupil with PHI was not involved. The two pupils with PHI paired together. They took 9 minutes to complete the task.

However, at some point the pupils with PHI were left out during the teaching and learning process. For instance, the teacher talked without writing the visual explanations or concepts on the chalkboard despite clear problems from the pupils with PHI. Teacher's responsiveness to the pupils with PHI was often distracted when he focused on pupils without disabilities. The pupils were not encouraged to answer questions. In addition, the researcher observed that key questions and vocabulary were not written down on the chalk-board. As a result, the pupils with PHI could not participate. Furthermore, the participation of the observed pupil with PHI was limited by the communication difficulties because of the nature of her disability.

In terms of interaction between the teacher and the observed pupil with PHI, the researcher observed that the teacher did not initiate any interaction with the observed

pupil with PHI during the whole-class teaching. He only initiated the interaction with the observed pupil with PHI during the pair's discussion. The teacher initiated the interaction with the observed pupil with PHI to check how the pupils with PHI were doing in their pair discussion and to clarify some points to them. He wanted them to find words in the numbered lines on the diagram of the eye. The teacher spent seven minutes helping pupils with PHI with the task. This was academic interaction and there was no social interaction between the teacher and the pupils with PHI. However, the challenge was that the teacher lacked supplementary sign language skills to keep them fully participating.

Similarly, the observed pupil with PHI initiated the interaction with the teacher only once by volunteering to write the answer on the chalkboard but the teacher told her that she would do that later and allowed someone else to state the answer. The observed pupil with PHI looked very disappointed and went back to her seat and started scribbling in her note book. Thus initiative of the observed pupil with PHI to contribute during classroom learning was non facilitated by the teacher. Furthermore, the observation revealed that the teacher's interaction with the observed pupil with PHI was limited because of lack of knowledge in sign language and lip reading. The observation suggested that the observed pupil with PHI was therefore physically present but could not meaningfully participate and contribute in the learning process.

The affinity of pupils to each other and non-discrimination

The pupils with PHI were sitting together in the front row. They appeared comfortable sitting together. It could also be argued that the observed pupil with PHI

needed to lip-read the teacher as he was teaching and follow what was being written on the chalkboard. At times during the teaching process, the pupils with PHI were excluded because the teacher and other pupils lacked supplementary sign language skills. Furthermore, the observed pupil with PHI was not included in the group of pupils without disabilities but was left to discuss the task with another pupil with PHI.

Learning needs and the lack of support

Although the teacher recognised the diversity of pupils in the class, the observation suggested that there was no support for the teacher in terms of a sign language interpreter and special teachers. The teaching and learning materials were not adapted to respond to the learning needs of the pupils with PHI. For example, teaching and learning materials were not adapted to include sign language illustrations. Furthermore, the classroom activities were not adapted to respond to the learning needs of pupils with PHI. For example, the teacher taught while moving around the classroom, spoke while facing the chalkboard, which made it difficult for the pupils with PHI to lip-read the teacher.

7.4.2 Scenario 2

In Secondary School B, the observation was carried out on 18th January, 2007. The school was located in one of the urban areas of the Northern Region of the country. This was a mixed-sex inclusive community day secondary school. The class started at 9:40 am and finished at 10:20 am. The teacher was teaching a Form 2 (Year 8) class that had a pupil with MLD. The class had a total of 55 pupils.

Variety of teaching methods and use of visual aids

The subject was Biology. The lesson was about the 'structure of a leaf'. The teacher started the lesson by asking the class about what they had learned in the previous lesson for five minutes. He then introduced the new lesson about the 'structure of a leaf'. The teacher retrieved the pupils' prior knowledge of the structure of the leaf through questions for eight minutes. The teacher distributed leaves, with the help of two pupils, to the class. He asked the pupils to discuss the structure of a leaf, identify the names of its parts and the functions with a friend sitting next to them in five minutes. The teacher told the pupils that after the discussions, the representative of each group should go and label the structures of a leaf on the chalkboard and explain their functions in ten minutes. The teacher went around finding out if the pupils were doing their tasks and if they needed some clarifications. After the presentations, the teacher continued with the lesson for ten minutes and spent the last two minutes to conclude what was covered by asking the pupils quick questions. He then dismissed the class.

The teacher used a variety of teaching methods in delivering the lesson. The methods included whole class teaching, questions and answers, and small group discussions. He had a lesson plan and used teaching and learning visual aids, such as posters with the diagrams of the structure of a leaf.

SNE as a cause of slow learning in class

The pupil with MLD participated in the whole class teaching, small group discussions, and the presentation of his group work. However, there were challenges. Greater participation by the pupil with MLD required more time and patience from the whole class and the teacher because the pupil with MLD was speaking very slowly and with difficulties because his speech was impaired. The pupil could also not steadily hold the pen due to fine and gross motor difficulties. The pupil with MLD took nine minutes and forty seconds to complete the task. The teacher gave the pupil with MLD more time to respond to the questions. For example, at one point, the pupil with MLD took three minutes to recall what was taught in the previous lesson.

In terms of teacher-pupil interaction, the teacher always initiated the interactions by encouraging the pupil with MLD to ask and answer questions during the whole-class teaching and praised the correct responses. However, at some points, the pupil with MLD also initiated the interactions with the teacher by asking and answering questions.

Balancing the need not to discriminate and responsiveness to learning needs

The pupil with MLD was included in the groups of pupils without disabilities during group discussions. However, although the seating arrangement was flexible, the pupil with MLD was sitting alone in the front row. On the other hand, it could be argued that the front row was necessary for the pupil with MLD so that the teacher

could easily pay attention to him and the pupil with MLD could easily follow the teacher teaching and see what was written on the chalkboard.

Diverse learning needs and the need to adapt teaching aids

The teacher allowed the pupil with MLD more time to ask and answer questions. However, although the teacher recognised the diversity in learning abilities, the teaching and learning materials and classroom activities were not adapted to respond to the learning needs of the pupil with MLD. The teacher and the pupil with MLD worked without support from the special teacher. However, there was greater responsiveness by Teacher 2, compared to Teacher 1. This was partly because Teacher 2 had a special teacher to provide support.

7.4.3 Scenario 3

The classroom observation in secondary school C was carried out on 1st February, 2007. The school was located in one of the urban areas of the Central Region of the country. This was a girls' only inclusive boarding secondary school. The class started at 9:00 am and finished at 9:40 am. Teacher 3 was teaching a Form 2 (Year 8) class which had three pupils with visual impairment, and two pupils with HI. Observed was a pupil with PVI. The class had a total of 46 pupils.

Use of debate to deliver a lesson

The topic was a debate in Chichewa (vernacular language). The teacher quickly started by giving a recapitulation of what was covered in the previous lesson about

marriage. She then introduced the new topic for the debate. The debate was about whether it was good to marry a man or a woman chosen by one's parents or guardians. The teacher divided the class into two groups. The pupil with PVI was in group A which thought that it was good to marry a man or a woman chosen by one's parents or guardians. The teacher used the debate to deliver the lesson.

Like Teachers 1 and 2 therefore, Teacher 3 appeared well trained to deliver a general lesson.

A participatory activity resulting in high participation for pupil with SNE

Despite no special effort from the teacher, the participatory nature of the activity resulted in full participation of the pupil with PVI. She volunteered to contribute to the debate. Her defence for the group in the debate was that it was good to marry a man or a woman chosen by one's parents or guardians because they knew what is best for their child and they would not find someone who was not good for their child. Each participant was given the equal amount of time, two minutes each. The entire debate took 30 minutes.

In terms of teacher-pupil interaction, the teacher did not initiate any interaction with the pupil with PVI and the rest of the pupils because it was a debate which was controlled by the chairperson and the teacher was a listener. The pupil with PVI did not initiate any interaction with the teacher but volunteered to contribute her thoughts towards the debate.

The teacher spent the last ten minutes encouraging those who did not participate in the debate to do so next time and asked all pupils to clap hands for themselves for the lively debate. She then told the pupils what would be covered in the next lesson and dismissed the class.

Non-discrimination and the dilemma in seating arrangement

Again, like in the case of Teacher 1 and 2, there was unwitting discrimination in Teacher 3's class mainly through seating arrangement. The pupils with disabilities were sitting together in the front row.

Recognition of diverse learning needs without contact

Although the teacher recognised the diversity of learning disabilities, there was no teacher contact with the pupil with PVI. The teacher and the pupil with PVI worked without the support of the special teacher. The summary of the debate was not transcribed into Braille for the pupil with PVI. The teacher appeared to have no lesson plan. The teacher did not adapt the teaching activities because of the nature of the topic.

7.4.4 Scenario 4

In secondary school D, the classroom observation was carried out on 7th February, 2007. The school was located in one of the rural-urban areas of the Southern Region of the country. This was a mixed-sex inclusive boarding secondary school. The class

started at 10:00 am and finished at 10:40 am. Teacher 4 was teaching a Form 2 (Year 8) class which had one pupil with PI and VI. Observed was a pupil with PI. The class had a total of 36 pupils.

Competence in general teaching methods

The teacher was teaching about conjunctions in vernacular language. The teacher started the lesson by recapitulating what was covered in the previous lesson through questions. He continued by retrieving the pupils' prior knowledge of the conjunctions that they knew and asked them to construct sentences using them. After fifteen minutes, the teacher asked the pupils to go into groups of seven and come up with more conjunctions and make sentences using them. He told the pupils that at the end of the given time, each group representative would be required to present their work to the class. The pupils divided themselves into groups. The teacher went around the groups finding out if the pupils had any problems.

The teacher used a variety of teaching methods such as questions and answers, whole class teaching, and small group discussions to enhance learning and participation in the classroom activities. He had a lesson plan. The pupil with PI did not need any special teaching and learning materials.

Teacher 4, just like Teacher 1, 2 and 3 appeared to be generally competent to deliver a lesson.

Lack of encouragement and passive participation by a pupil with PI

Despite the use of a variety of the delivery methods, the participation of the pupil with PI remained passive. The teacher did not encourage the pupil with PI to ask and answer questions. There was no teacher-pupil interaction. The pupil with PI had no reading, communication and writing problems.

Apparent pupil choice by pupils with SNE be in the same learning group

During group discussions, the pupil with PI joined the group of pupils without disabilities. The observations suggested that although the teacher had a lesson plan, he did not indicate how best he could include a pupil with PI in the classroom activities. Furthermore, although the seating arrangement was flexible, it encouraged some form of discrimination as the pupils with disabilities chose to sit together in the front row.

Pupil's ability to cope in an activity requiring no special support

Teacher's response to learning needs

There was no direct contact between the teacher and the pupil with PI. The teacher and the pupil with PI worked without any support because there was no need for special support in the classroom. The teaching and learning materials including

classroom activities were not adapted because the pupil could cope like the other pupils.

7.5 Discussion

As noted in Chapters 4 and 5, the social model and international standards and frameworks (ISFs) have had much impact in Malawi's context of influence. In particular, the values of inclusion, such as non-discrimination, valuing diversity, and participation, have great moral force. These values have been embedded in policy texts, such as the NSNEP for implementation in the context of practice. The classroom observations shed more light on the implementation of inclusion.

7.5.1 Reflection of principles of inclusion from the context of influence

There was evidence that the goals, values, and principles of inclusion are being implemented in Malawi's inclusive schools. There were pupils with disabilities who were mixed with pupils without disabilities in the four schools observed. These pupils were being taught alongside pupils without disabilities.

There was, during the four classes observed, a reflection of the inclusion principles of participation and valuing diversity. The need to stimulate participation was common to all the teachers. This may have emanated from the teachers general training as teachers. It was clear, however, that as with the case of Scenario 3 with the student with PVI, there is need for specialist and training skills on teachers to

encourage greater and more effective participation in some pupils. The case of Scenario I with the pupils with PHI shows that for pupils with disabilities, the level of participation may depend on the teacher's responsiveness, which is a skill that may be taught or developed.

Teachers' skills acquired from general training, such as that teaching methods need to be varied, appeared to have helped the realisation of the principle of valuing diversity in the sense that certain methods would suit the needs of a pupil with disability, as was the case with Scenario 1. In addition, the general skill in the use of teaching aids was clearly helpful, certainly in the case of Scenario 2. However, the challenge for IE in Malawi on this is to have teachers who are able to adapt visual and other learning aids to suit and stimulate the learning capacities of certain pupils with disabilities.

There was, however, dilemma with regard to the meaning of the principle of non-discrimination in practice. The seating arrangement in all the four classes would, on the surface, suggest that there was unwitting discrimination when pupils with disability sat together or in front. The observation, however, revealed that some of the students with disabilities had affinity for each other and preferred to seat or work together or to sit in front in order to maximise their learning. Although some of the pupils may have appeared segregated in the classroom to a stranger, they were comfortable with their choices on where to sit. For practical reasons, further, it appears that sitting in front aided effective learning for pupils with disabilities. This issue can be resolved when it is understood that the goal of IE is much about effective learning as much as it is about promoting non-discrimination. Where the

pupil chooses to be or adopt a certain position to aid her or his effective learning, there would be no real case to allege non-discrimination.

7.5.2 Reflection of the contents of policy texts

Ball argues that in the context of practice, teachers re-interpret policy texts to suit their situations or to contest the contents of such texts (Ball, 1994). In the four observed classes, mirroring the findings in Chapters 4 and 6, there were no apparent contestations of inclusion from the teachers. As was established in Chapter 6, instead, there was a general awareness in all the four teachers of the tenets of IE.

The skills that the teachers employed and their attempts in teaching the pupils with disability reflected general teaching skills and methodologies. This was so because they lacked training in SNE and IE or they lacked knowledge and understanding of the specific requirements of such policy. Both these possibilities were findings in Chapter 6 regarding teachers' awareness of policy texts and the lack of an implemented training strategy on IE in Malawi's secondary schools.

Otherwise the only clear evidence of what is contained in the key policy on IE was the indication of some support from an SNE teacher for one of the teachers. Such scarcity of SNE teachers and related staff is in itself, as some of the élites argued in Chapter 4, a contradiction. Taken together, the key policies require a degree of uniformity in their implementation and outcomes of the policy in the interest of equity. As established in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, however, the policy texts are deficient

in addressing the shortage of resources which would entail that all the four schools should have had SNE staff.

7.5.3 The context of practice and general teaching methods and schools

There was, in general, a common style in the delivery of the lessons in the inclusive classrooms. This is because of the knowledge and skills acquired from the general teacher training. The delivery of the lessons revealed that the lessons were clear and well organised and the teachers were conversant with effective teaching methods and procedures. The teachers started teaching by recapitulating what was covered in the previous lessons by asking the pupils questions. They then introduced the new topic and used the pupils' prior knowledge on the topic to develop new knowledge. This was done through questions and answers and in the process they gained the pupils' attention. The teachers used a variety of teaching methods such as whole class teaching, group discussions, and questions and answers to enhance learning and participation. The questioning helped the teachers to ensure that pupils contributed their own experiences. The teachers concluded the lessons by reviewing what was covered through questions and answers and told the pupils what would be covered in the next lessons.

However, although the common style exemplified general competency and skills in lesson delivery, there was no consistent style to respond to the specific needs of pupils with disabilities. Teachers had no lesson plans that were adapted to respond to the needs of the pupils with disabilities. This shows the teachers' less than ideal

awareness of the needs of pupils with disabilities. Whilst there was awareness that participatory methods were essential for effective teaching, Teacher 4 did not use the visual aids necessary for SNE pupils. Whilst the observed pupils and the teachers required specialist support, there was no support in all the observed classrooms. Significant in observed practice was that the teachers lacked knowledge and skills of SNE.

With the exception of Scenario 2, all the teachers appeared to deliver IE using their general teaching skills. This augments the point made by both the élites in Chapter 4 and teachers in Chapter 6, that there was a shortage of properly trained staff in Malawi's inclusive secondary school to support IE in practice. It also confirms the finding in Chapter 6 that there were very few teachers who were qualified in SNE in the sampled schools. The teacher in Scenario 2 was the only one of the four teachers who received specialist support, validating the point made by some teachers in Chapter 6 that specialist support was often not available and that it was highly valued when available.

Inclusion and participation in the four observed classrooms depended on teachers' efforts, nature of the subjects, activities and the pro-activity of the pupils with disabilities. For example, In Scenarios 1 and 4, teachers did not encourage the pupils with disabilities to participate in the learning process whilst in Scenario 2, the teacher gave an opportunity to the pupil with MLD to participate fully in the class activities. The pupil was allowed to ask questions, the teacher asked him questions and he contributed the right answers. Whilst the observed pupils with disabilities and their teachers required support, there were no special teachers in any of the observed

classrooms to support communication and mediate lesson goals. Lack of support was also echoed in the works of Eleweke and Rodda (2002), UNESCO (2000, 2002) in other countries of the South. The observation further corroborates Booth, Ainscow and Dyson (1998), though in a different context, that a high level of participation from pupils in an English school was associated with teachers who were purposeful, enthusiastic, and clear in their directions, instructions and tried to link lesson activities to the pupils' experiences. The Malawi context, on its part, revealed that deliberate use of group work and collaborative learning strategies promoted the participation of pupils with disabilities.

The two issues that mostly problematise IE in the countries of the South were observable in the four classrooms. Firstly, with regard to scarcity of resources, teaching and learning materials and other resources were clearly in short supply. Despite the general competence of the teachers in lesson-planning and the use of a diversity of methods involving participatory activities, it was clear that the lack of resources was negatively impacting the teaching and learning process.

Secondly, it was questionable whether the teaching or learning in the inclusive classroom was both effective and efficient. In the case of Scenario 2 with the pupil with MLD, the lesson pace was obviously slow. Attempts to have the student participate, further delayed progression in the lesson. It was possible that the learning of the other pupils without disabilities was adversely affected. In Scenario 2, the teacher and the pupil with MLD constituted a clear case when the teacher did not know how effectively to respond to the pupil's "within" learning factors. The teacher's valuing of diversity, however, generated inefficiency in the use of teaching

and learning time. In an inclusive classroom without special support, pupils with disabilities required more time and attention. The slow pace of lessons may demotivate those pupils who may feel they can learn faster. In the end, pupils without disabilities were required to accommodate the learning needs of the pupils with disabilities.

In terms of individual differences in relation to the way pupils with disabilities responded to the teachers, pupil 1 tried to respond to the teacher by offering to write an answer on the board but the teacher asked her to sit down. Pupil 2 was always given opportunities to respond to the teacher's questions. Pupil 3 was greatly involved in a debate whilst pupil 4 did not respond to teacher's questions. This indicates that in Scenarios 1 and 4, teachers were less sensitive to the pupils whilst in Scenarios 2 and 3, teachers offered the pupils opportunities to show their abilities. In Scenarios 1 and 4, teachers did not highly involve pupils with disabilities in the learning process. It would appear that the teachers disregarded or failed to observe clear difficulties from the pupils with disabilities. The observed pupil with PHI therefore appeared bored and resorted to scribbling in her note book, whilst the pupil with physical impairments appeared uninterested. This corroborates the finding reported by Booth et al (1998) in the countries of the North. They found that where teachers could not set up the lessons to make the tasks clear and failed to notice and intervene if participation declined, it was common to see students looking uninterested or substituting their own curriculum of social talk with their classmates. The observations suggested that teacher-pupil interactions depended on who initiated them. For instance, in Scenario 1 teacher did not initiate teacher-pupil interaction during whole class teaching but initiated it during the pupils with PHI pair's

discussion. The observed pupil with PHI initiated the interaction when she volunteered to write the answer on the chalkboard.

In addition, the nature of the subjects and learning activity determined the level of participation of the pupils with disabilities. Further participation in the Chichewa Language (School C) lessons was higher than in the unfamiliar science subject and English. It was easier for the teachers to draw on the pupils' experiences to advance learning in their mother tongue than in subjects that were introduced as bringing entirely new knowledge and vocabulary. Further, activities that were inherently participatory, such as a debate and group discussions on a familiar topic enhanced the participation of the pupil with disabilities. However, non-participation of some pupils with disabilities in inclusive classrooms was also echoed in McBride's (2009) report on the provision of IE in Botswana schools.

7.6 Conclusion

The classroom observations, augmenting a key finding in Chapter 6, revealed both a certain reflection of and mismatch with the goals and values and IE. The reflection stem from the facts that inclusion was not really contested in the context of practice. Although there was merely general awareness of the existence of a policy on IE, teachers used skills acquired from general training to promote pupil participation and valuing of diversity.

Although there was, generally, a common approach to the delivery of lessons that inclined towards a variety of method and participatory activities, there is no general

approach in responding to SNE. This is largely because the teachers observed in this study were not trained in SNE, augmenting one of the key findings of this study that there was no training strategy being implemented for secondary school teachers in inclusive schools. In addition, there was little support from specialist staff in SNE. However, even with SNE training, teachers could not be expected to deal with VI, HI and LD without alternative communication systems otherwise pupils would be excluded.

The observation at the classroom level underlined the seriousness of inadequate resources and problems encountered by the social model in attaining effective teaching and learning. There were inadequate teaching and learning materials for the classrooms. There was also very little specialist support. In cases of profound SNE, the effectiveness and time-efficiency of IE was brought into question as a lesson proceeded very slowly to accommodate the pace of the pupil with disabilities. Such importance of the child's "within" learning factors may suffice to make a case for the serious consideration of the interactionist approach, to go beyond the logic of the social model.

Chapter Eight presents, interprets and discusses the findings from semi-structured interviews with the four observed pupils with disabilities.

CHAPTER 8: CONTEXT OF PRACTICE: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH PUPILS WITH DISABILITIES

8.1 Introduction

To further understand the experiences of pupils with disabilities in Malawi's inclusive secondary schools, this study used semi-structured interviews with the four pupils with disabilities that were observed. One objective of the interviews was to allow the voices of some of the pupils with disabilities in Malawi's inclusive schools to be heard.

The findings in this chapter provide further insight into the reported experiences and views of pupils with disabilities in inclusive secondary schools in Malawi. Their voices and experiential knowledge assisted in addressing some of the gaps in understanding their reality in the context of practice.

8.2 Aims

The aim of the interviews was to explore pupils' views and major lived and learning experiences as pupils with disabilities in inclusive secondary schools.

8.3 Methods

As part of the mixed method approach, semi-structured pupil interviews were used. Some of the questions were adapted from Aubrey, Sutton and Aubrey's (2004)

study. The questions were simplified to make them more direct for easy understanding. For instance, the questions covered the general views to schooling, teachers and types of lessons favoured and were constructed to avoid the use of leading questions.

8.3.1 Participants

The total sample for the study was the observed 4 pupils with disabilities (Chapter 7) from the four selected secondary schools. The small sample provided a more focused in-depth understanding of the views and lived experiences of such pupils in inclusive secondary schools. Pupils are represented by numbers for confidentiality and anonymity reasons. Table 8.1 below shows the four pupils interviewed and types of disabilities the pupils had. A maximum variation sample of schools was used that comprised schools from the North, South and Central regions of the country that included pupils with different types of disabilities.

Table 8.1: The Interviewed four pupils with disabilities

Secondary School	Pupils' Numbers	Pupils' Types of Disabilities	Date of Interviews
A	1	PHI	18/1/2007
B	2	MLD	23/1/2007
C	3	PVI	1/2/2007
D	4	PI	7/2/2007

8.3.2 Materials

The semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix 5) had two sections. Section 1 captured the pupils' background information. Section 2 captured information related to their views, lived and learning experiences in IE.

8.3.3 Procedures

The consent to interview the observed pupils with disabilities was sought from the MoE, headteachers and the pupils themselves. Every effort was made to keep the questions consistently simple and easily understandable for them. The pupil with PHI in School A was requested to write her responses on the interview schedule because the school had no specialist teacher in sign language.

The interviews were conducted after the classroom observations at agreed times and venues in the schools. Each interview took between twenty to thirty minutes, depending on how elaborated the response was to individual question.

There were strong ethical considerations for the interviews. Rose and Grosvenor (2001) maintain that researching the views of children brings great ethical concerns. This is so because such children are vulnerable. The researcher had a crucial duty to pay close attention to pupils with disabilities, to look at their reported experiences of inclusion, to search deep into their personal thoughts and feelings so as to comprehend what they were narrating, and not to listen to their voices only superficially (Bines, 1995).

8.3.4 Data analysis

The responses were analysed thematically question by question following Braun and Clarke's (2006) a step by step guide composed of six phases as described for the elite interview data (Chapter Four).

8.4 Findings: pupils' views and lived experiences

The following section is a dense description of synthesised findings based on phase five of Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. The findings are presented with limited discussion as this will be done in the discussion section (phase six of Braun and Clarke's, 2006, thematic analysis).

8.4.1 Pupils' reasons for being selected into secondary school

Pupils were asked to state whether they knew why they were selected to go to secondary school. Pupils' reported reasons for secondary selection were attributed to their **hard-work**. Pupil 1 indicated, "*Yes, because I passed primary school leaving examinations*". Pupils 2 stated, "*Yes, to learn because I worked hard in primary school*". Pupil 3 stated, "*Yes, because I was waking up early in the morning to read so that I can pass the examinations and go to secondary school*". Pupil 4 indicated, "*Yes, I was selected to come and learn*".

8.4.2 Pupils' opinion of what new pupils needed to know

The pupils were asked to state what they felt new pupils needed to know in order to have a good time and be successful in the school. **Diligence** and **protection from being infected with HIV** were what the pupils thought new pupils needed to know. Pupil 1 stated, *"She/he needs to work hard"*. Pupil 3 indicated, *"When the teachers teach in the class they should understand and need do exercises so that they can pass exams"*. Pupil 4 stated, *"She/he should read hard"*. Pupil 2 stated, *"They need to know about HIV and AIDS so that they should not mess about with the girls or boys"*.

8.4.3 What pupils felt was the 'best thing' about their secondary schools

Pupils were asked to state the 'best things' about their secondary schools. There were **mixed views** about their schools as indicated by the Pupils 2, 3 and 4. Pupil 2 responded, *"Pupils learn religious education which guides our moral behaviour"*. Pupil 3 stated, *"There are clubs such as Scripture Union and 'Kayo,' where we learn how one can lead a moral life as a student"*. Pupil 4 responded, *"There is good teaching"*. However, Pupil 1 stated that there was nothing that she described as good about her secondary school. When she was asked to state the reason she felt that way, she responded, *"There are no specialist teachers for us and we don't follow what is being taught in class because we cannot hear anything"*.

8.4.4 What was not good about their schools

The pupils were asked to identify what they felt was not good about their schools. What was not good about their schools related to **shortage of specialist teachers and other SNE-related human resources, lack of extra-time for learning, unfriendly school physical environment, and distance to school**. Pupil 1 indicated, *“There are no specialist teachers who can assist us with our education and sign language”*. Pupil 2 stated, *“The school is far away from my home and I have to cover a long distance travelling to and from it”*. He further stated, that *“The school does not provide assistance in reading and I am not given extra time for study”*. Pupil 3 responded, *“We have steps and because I have special needs if I forget that there are steps, I can fall”*.

Despite much probing, Pupil 4 was insistent that there was nothing bad about his secondary school.

8.4.5 Pupils' suggested changes

Pupils were asked to suggest what they would like to change about their schools. All the pupils were of the view that **school needed to be responsive** to the needs of pupils with disabilities. Pupil 1 suggested, *“The school should have specialist teachers”*. Pupil 2 suggested, *“I should be assisted with transport to and from school and home”*. He added, *“The school should provide support during reading time and I should be given extra time for study”*. Pupil 3 suggested, *“In the hostels there are*

stair railings therefore they should do the same in the corridors where there are stairs”.

Pupil 4 had nothing to suggest because he said he did not find anything bad about his school.

8.4.6 Pupils’ favourite teachers

The pupils were asked to state whether they had a favourite teacher and what was special about such a teacher. All the pupils indicated that they had a favourite teacher and this they attributed to **good teaching**. Pupils 1 and 2 stated that the special thing about their teachers was that they taught English ‘very well’ Pupil 3 stated, *“Yes, when she is teaching, she sees to it that I am listening and answering questions”*. The pupil exclaimed, *“So I am curious about her!”* Pupil 4 stated that his teacher taught Biology well. ‘Teaching well’ was positively regarded but it proved difficult to get pupils to elaborate.

8.4.7 A teacher who was not so good

The pupils were asked to think of a teacher who was not good and to state what was not so good about him or her. Pupils 1, 2 and 3 could not think of a teacher who was not good. The pupils though gave examples of **teachers’ effectiveness and friendliness** in relation to good teachers. Pupil 1 stated, *“They are all good because they try their best to help us”*. Pupil 2 responded, *“They are so good. They are my friends”*. Pupil 3 could not elaborate on the answer despite probing. However, Pupil

4 indicated, *“There is a teacher who is not good because he does not teach Agriculture well.*

Teaching ‘well’ was positively regarded but it provided difficulty to get pupils to elaborate on this point.

8.4.8 Whether the pupils worked really hard in school

The pupils were asked whether they really worked hard in school. All the pupils 1, 2, 3, and 4 stated that they worked really hard in school and this was attributed to their **reading all the time** so that they could pass their examinations.

8.4.9 A good lesson

The pupils were asked to think of a really good lesson they had had in school. There was a general understanding that **English lessons** would enable them to communicate effectively as all the four pupils mentioned English. In terms of what made it really so good, Pupil 1 responded, *“I will communicate well”*. Pupil 2 stated, *“I will improve how to speak and write it well”*. Pupil 3 responded, *“I will be able to know how to speak English and these days people want those who know how to speak English at work”*. Pupil 4 stated, *“I will improve in my spoken English”*.

8.4.10 A ‘not-so-good’ lesson

The pupils were asked to think about a ‘not-so-good’ lesson that they really did not like at all and state the reason for not liking it. There were mixed views and

experiences among the pupils. Pupil 1 indicated, “**Mathematics**” and the reason given was **lack of specialist teachers**. She stated, “*There are no specialist teachers to help us*”. Pupils 2 and 4 indicated that there was no such lesson. Pupil 3 mentioned “**French**” and the reason given was **lack of knowledge about its pronunciation**. She stated, “*I do not know how to pronounce it properly. I cannot see how it is written. One can easily write the word ‘bonjour’ in Chichewa while others have written it properly*”. The pupils were further asked to suggest what should be done to help them pass the subjects. Pupil 1 suggested that there was a **need for specialist teachers**. Pupil 3 suggested that there was a **need for books in Braille**.

8.4.11 Support from other pupils

Pupils were asked to think of other pupils who were ‘good’ to them and what they thought was ‘good’ about such pupils. The pupils responded that there were other pupils who were ‘good’ to them. As regards what was ‘good’ about such pupils, **support with classroom work, mobility and personal needs** transpired. Pupil 1 responded, “*They try to help us with school work*”. Pupil 2 stated, “*They help me to practice other problems like solving mathematics and I have discussions with them*”. Pupil 3 responded, “*When they copy their notes they make sure that we have also copied the notes before we get out of the class*”. Pupil 4 responded, “*They wash my clothes. They take me to bath and to the classes and they help me move around*”.

8.4.12 Other pupils who were ‘not so good’

The four pupils were asked to think of other pupils who were ‘not so good’ to them and to state what was ‘not so good’ about such pupils. Pupils 1, 2 and 4 agreed that there were other pupils who were ‘not so good’ to them. What was ‘not so good’ about them was attributed to **unwanted peer pressure and other pupils’ refusal to assist them**. Pupil 1 stated, *“They don’t help us”*. Pupil 2 explained, *“They tell me to join the bad group but I do not want to join that group because they behave badly”*. Pupil 4 elaborated, *“When I ask them to help me wash my clothes, they refuse. When I ask them to take me to classes they refuse”*. However, Pupil 3 stated that there were no such pupils in her school.

8.4.13 Pupils’ perceived barriers to learning and participation and strategies to address them

Pupils were asked to identify barriers to learning and participation and to suggest strategies to address such barriers.

Lack of special teaching and learning materials was the first identified barrier to learning and participation by Pupils 1, 2, and 4. Pupil 1 stated, *“There are no special teaching and learning materials with sign language illustrations”*. Pupil 2 indicated, *“No teaching and learning materials for school”*. Pupil 4 indicated, *“Lack of books”*. The suggested strategy to address this barrier by pupils 2 and 4 was that the Government should provide special teaching and learning materials. Pupil 1 did not suggest any strategy.

Lack of specialist teachers was the second barrier identified by Pupil 1. She stated, *“There are no specialist teachers for sign language”*. In order to address such barrier, Pupil 1 suggested, *“Government should employ specialist teachers for sign language”*.

The third barrier as identified by Pupil 1 again was **lack of a resource centre** in her school. To address such barrier, Pupil 1 suggested, *“The Government should construct a resource centre in our school”*.

Lack of meeting basic needs (poverty) was the fourth identified barrier by Pupil 2. The pupil mentioned, *“Clothes and shoes to wear when going to school, money to buy soap and school fees”*. To emphasise the point on the shoes issue, he lifted up his foot and stated, *“Look at my shoes very bad”*. In order to address such barrier, he suggested **the provision of basic needs**. For instance, he stated, *“Well-wishers should provide clothes, shoes, soap and school fees”*.

The **lack of sensitisation** was the fifth identified barrier by pupil 3. She explained, *“The problem that we encounter are when we are learning and our friends are writing something on the board, they do not know that we can’t see. We just hear that they have written on the board”*. In order to address such barrier, she suggested **sensitisation**. For example, she explained, *“Other pupils need to be sensitized on the issues of pupils with profound visual impairment”*.

Lack of freedom to opt for subjects of choice was the sixth identified barrier by Pupil 3. She stated, *“Pupils with profound visual impairment are told to drop some*

of the subjects like physical science and mathematics they cannot work with numbers". In order to address such barrier, she suggested, "Teachers need to encourage pupils with profound visual impairment to take physical science and mathematics and provide extra classes for them, instead of telling them to drop the subjects".

8.5 Discussion

The responses of the four pupils with disability further augment what was observed in the classrooms (Chapter 7) and the responses of the élites and teachers in Chapters 4 and 6 respectively.

8.5.1 Reflection of the context of influence in the context of practice

The responses of the pupils showed that, to some appreciable extent from their perspective, certain values and principles of inclusion were being realised or enjoyed. The pupils stressed that their fellow pupils were helpful and friendly. This point was also made by some of the teachers in the sample. It means that one objective of inclusion, that people with disabilities should feel socially accepted was being realised at least to some extent. This also revealed that although there were still elements of discrimination, stigma, and unhelpfulness on part of some pupils without disabilities, by and large, the four pupils with disabilities did not feel discriminated against.

The pupils further appreciated the work and helpfulness of some of their teachers, willing to describe some of their teachers and some lessons as good. Such a finding confirms Kenny, McNeela and Shevlin (2005) in an Irish school and Francis and Muthukrishna (2004) in South African school that pupils with disabilities appreciated teachers' efforts to help them. Such appreciation entails that there was some appreciable response to some of their learning needs, entailing that the teachers, as was observed in Chapter 7, valued the diversity of needs among their pupils. This further corroborates Fletcher-Campbell's (2005) finding that when pupils were interviewed about differences between educational placement and /or teachers, they frequently commented to the effect that a particular teacher or assistant explained things to them.

There were at least three other points related to inclusion, which were also mentioned by some of the *élites* in Chapter 4 and some of the teachers in Chapter 6 that were clearly reflected in the pupil's responses. The first was the point made by the *élites* that most teachers do not resist inclusion and wanted their pupils to succeed, a point repeated by some of the teachers in the survey (Chapter 6). Pupil 2, for example, spoke of teachers as friendly and helpful. The second, as noted by some teachers and some of the *élites*, was that the pupils were very conscious of their abilities. Thus they held that they were selected to attend secondary schools because of their abilities. Connected to this point, the third aspect was that the pupils understood the importance of diligence, a point also stressed by some of the teachers in the survey. These three aspects exemplify the notion in inclusion that 'disability is not inability' and that disability can be socially constructed.

8.5.2 Reflection of policy texts on inclusion

There was no direct reflection of the contents of the policy in the responses of the pupils, except that the pupils were included in ordinary schools. It was clear, however, that some of the key strategies and resources required in the policy were missing. For example, the need for sensitisation, as identified in the NSNEP, was mentioned as a required strategy or action.

It was similar with regard to specialist and support teachers, resource centres, and other teaching and learning materials. This underlines the gaps between policy requirements and realities. In the Malawi context, this is largely due to the poor resourcing of IE.

8.5.3 The realities of the context of practice

Although there is acceptance of inclusion in the context of practice, the lack of needs effectively to implement IE characterised the experiences of the four pupils with disabilities. The pupils, like the élites and their teachers (Chapters 4 and 6) articulated lack of specialist teachers, learning materials, resource centres, and specialist support as negative experiences and barriers.

Like the teachers in the survey (Chapter 6), the pupils appeared to link positive experiences with effective learning and negative experiences with ineffective learning. The pupils tended to associate this with teaching, although, in appreciation

of the constraints faced by their teachers, they were reluctant to be critical. One of the pupils, for example, Pupil 4, refused to mention anything bad about his school. In particular, positive experiences were linked to functionality and usefulness of the learning experience. Thus the importance of learning English made the pupils to characterise English as a good subject. In contrast, French, which is not very important for communication in Malawi, was characterised by at least one pupil as a bad subject. The heavy workloads of the teachers were reflected in the pupils' complaint that there was lack of additional or extra-time teaching, for them to keep abreast with other pupils who might be faster learners.

The responses of the pupils further revealed that much as inclusion is not contested in the context of practice, disability based stereotyping continues. For example, Pupil 3 complained that pupils with disability lacked freedom to choose subjects they desired, being told that Mathematics and Science are too difficult for them.

One response, the need for a holist approach to learning needs, stood out as a distinctive contribution from one of the pupils (PVI). Pupil 3 underlined the need for good moral education and activities. Pupil 2 underlined the need to know how to prevent contracting HIV. Pupil 3 valued the extra-curricular activities available in the school, such as Scripture Union and 'Kayo' clubs where they learnt how one could lead a moral life as a pupil. Pupil 2 underlined the need to have basic needs such as clothes met for effective learning. These responses entail that the four pupils with disabilities regarded a holistic approach to their well-being as essential to their effective learning. This finding confirms Peters' (2004) finding that successful

strategies for addressing students' characteristics have taken into consideration economic needs of students.

8.6 Conclusion

The responses by the four pupils reveal both positive and negative aspects of the implementation of inclusion policy in Malawi's secondary schools. Although there might still be some stereotyping against pupils with disabilities, the goals, values, and principles of inclusion appear not to be contested. Support from fellow pupils and teachers was well-acknowledged by the pupils with disabilities.

The question about the effectiveness of the social model and inclusion, however, still has to be addressed. The lack of teaching and learning materials, properly trained teachers, and technical support, was perceived by the four pupils as adversely affecting their learning. The pupils, like their teachers, strongly link effective learning with good experiences. It is when the gaps and perceived barriers are addressed that the value of IE will be appreciated for learning outcomes that it is meant to achieve. To address such barriers and constraints, according to the pupils, entails taking a holistic approach to meeting the pupils' learning and other needs. To do this, the policies on inclusion in Malawi need to address the questions of not only having sufficient properly trained teachers, but also leveraging resources for IE.

Chapter Nine concludes the thesis. Noting the distinct contribution and implications of the study and making recommendations, the next chapter draws together the main themes that emerged from the contexts of influence, text production and practice.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION

9.1 Introduction

Located within an interpretative paradigm, the study has used Ball's trajectory model (Ball, 1994, 2004) to explore the inclusive education (IE) policy-to-practice contexts in Malawi's inclusive secondary schools. A mixed-methods approach was adopted to collect data from the contexts of influence, policy text production, and practice (reported in Chapters Four, Five, Six, Seven and Eight). The data collection methods used were élite semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis, questionnaire for secondary school teachers in selected schools that are implementing Malawi's IE, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with observed four pupils with disabilities from the selected four schools. The study has already discussed the findings according to these methods, interpreting the data sets as the chapters unfolded.

It will be argued that IE policy that adequately responds to contexts of practice and achieves leverage on adequate resources can build on the existing goodwill of élites, teachers, and pupils to bring about effective IE in Malawi's secondary schools. Moreover, as Fulcher (1989) has argued, whilst national policy can have wide effects on schools, this does not require a top-down policy model. Policy is made at different levels and schools themselves can create their own policy and educational practices within their own institutional contexts, as this study shows.

The study seeks to contribute towards debate on the delivery of IE in the South. It further seeks to contribute towards knowledge generation and transfer through its investigation and analysis of the policy-to-practice contexts and experiences of pupils with disabilities and their teachers in inclusive secondary schools.

The broad question for this study has been as follows:

‘What is the policy-to-practice context for inclusion of pupils with disabilities in Malawi’s secondary schools?’

The more specific questions were:

- (i) To what extent have the international standards and frameworks influenced the policy of inclusion and practice in Malawi’s secondary schools?
- (ii) How do schools (teachers and headteachers) implement the policy regarding the inclusion of pupils with disabilities in secondary schools?
- (iii) What are the experiences of teachers and pupils’ with disabilities in inclusive secondary schools?
- (iv) What are the views of teachers tasked with implementation of inclusion policy into practice at school level and the views of pupils with disabilities?
- (v) What are the barriers to learning and participation faced by pupils with disabilities and what strategies would help Malawi to enable pupils with disabilities reach their full potential in inclusive secondary schools?

Questions (i), (ii), and (v) were addressed by collecting evidence from élites (key national figures) using semi-structured interviews. Question (i) was further addressed by collecting evidence from the context of text production through documentary analysis. Questions (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) and (vi) were addressed by collecting evidence from the context of practice through teachers' questionnaire. Question (ii) was further addressed through four classroom observations. Questions (iii), (iv) and (v) were addressed by collecting evidence from four observed pupils with disabilities through semi-structured interviews.

This chapter systematically analyses the results from the mixed-methods used and their respective data sets according to the specific research questions. The aim is to synthesize the results from the combined data sets in order to address the research questions and draw conclusions for this study. Suggesting a model for inclusive secondary education in Malawi, the study makes policy-related and practical recommendations, based on the theoretical, policy, and pedagogical implications of the research findings.

Accordingly, the chapter first revisits the research questions.

9.2 Research question 1: To what extent have the international standards and frameworks influenced inclusion policy and practice in Malawi's secondary schools?

The context of influence, where education policies are created, is often conceived in ideal terms. Often, as Ball (2009) intimates recently, there is little, if any

consideration, of differences in contexts and local capacities (Ball, 2009). This study confirmed this argument in that much as the Malawi's IE policy reflects a heavy influence of ISFs, its gaps and contradictions result from a tendency to favour an ideal that serves as an aspiration. This means that while the policy-makers may adhere to an ideal in the context of influence, it is likely to produce tension and contradiction in the context of text production that have an effect on the context of practice.

This is well-illustrated in Malawi's context, according to the findings in this study. The *élites* expressed the view that the influence of ISFs in the context of influence was so immense that Malawi's IE policy was now consistent with the ISFs. Such an influence appeared to have been facilitated by Malawi's transition to democracy and adoption of human rights principles. The *élites* highlighted the Salamanca Statement and Framework (UNESCO, 1994), and EFA (UN, 1990) as having influenced the adoption of school inclusion policy and practice in Malawi. This was illustrated by the *élites'* acknowledged changes of views and of definitions of disability and SE. Furthermore, the *élites* identified examples of noticeable changes in attitudes, policy developments, and the establishment of offices dedicated to the implementation of SNE. In this way, the *élites* indicated that ISFs had influenced attitudinal, conceptual, policy, and institutional changes.

The *élites'* opinions, however, were mixed, regarding the influence of ISFs in the context of policy text production. While some of the *élites* noted that Malawi's IE policy highlighted both social inclusion and rights to participation, others emphasised gaps and contradictions in the policy texts. Some noted that the policy

did not embrace all SEN. Still others recognised that the policy did not adequately take account of the problems of inadequate resources. Many underlined the lack of a strategy for training at national, regional and school level for key staff that was a major flaw.

The policy texts themselves, taken together, showed mixed influences of an inclusion discourse that views SEN in an educational and social context (a social model), on which the ISFs are based and a traditional exclusion discourse that regards disability as a personal impairment (a medical model). While post-1994 policy texts increasingly reflect the influence of the social model, there is still, within the body of relevant texts, pieces of legislation that are rooted in the medical model. In particular, the *élites* mentioned, and the documentary analysis confirmed, the 1972 Handicapped Persons Act reference as a text that is rooted in the medical model. The *élites* further stressed that there was lack of policy that embraced all SNE and characteristics of diversity from mild to severe, contrary to what the ISFs required.

Perceptions about the influence of ISFs among the sampled teachers were mixed, mainly because of uneven knowledge about such ISFs. Thus more than forty percent of the surveyed teachers thought that ISFs had either been very influential or influential on inclusion policy and practice, while a similar number of the surveyed teachers thought that ISFs had either not been very influential or not at all influential respectively. The reasons for holding mixed views about the influence of ISFs were that the teachers concerned had not received training in SNE, inadequacy and lack of specialist teachers in SNE, lack of infrastructure and facilities, inadequacy and lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials/resources, not much being done in

secondary schools, and lack of knowledge about ISFs. Meanwhile, the others indicated that they did not know. This shows that the impact of ISFs is much less in the context of practice than in the context of influence.

The documentary analysis revealed that the Government had indeed produced various policy documents that aimed to guarantee and protect the rights of persons with disabilities to education in line with ISFs. Indeed, the policy texts showed that since 1994, there has been an increased emphasis on a rights discourse, stressing self-reliance, independence and equality that recognised the oppression and disabling influence of the medical model, a point stressed by some of the *élites*. Thus the *élites* were acknowledging that there was need for the reform not only of the Handicapped Persons Act (GoM, 1972), but also the Education Act (GoM, 1962).

The *élites* were very frank in noting the shortcomings of the current policy regime on IE. For example, they noted that the questions about how to redistribute resources in favour of IE and whether inclusion was the most effective method to deliver SNE were not addressed in the NSNEP (MoEVT, 2007). Effective schooling and IE are not synonymous, as noted by Peters (2004), who indicates the need for school restructuring and reform policy and practice in the South. Moreover, whilst critical investment is needed, the way in which resources are allocated profoundly influences the effectiveness of implementation.

The lack of a pre-service training and in-service professional development strategy partly explains the shortage of both generalist teachers, with knowledge and skill on all types of SNE and specialist teachers, specifically trained to address certain types

of SNE such as visual impairment, hearing impairment, and learning disabilities. Alternative communication systems for instruction and assessment are as central to access as teachers' instruction and their curriculum delivery are central to physical access. As is the case with Malawi, Kamchedzera (2008) noted that the training of specialist teachers is restricted to VI, HI, and LD and yet there is also a need for SNE generalists who can meet the diverse needs of all pupils. Haug (2003) argues that pre-service teacher education should equip student teachers with a competence that will enable them to meet and teach pupils with diverse needs. In addition, the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) highlights that, "a non-categorical approach encompassing all types of disabilities should be developed as a common core, prior to further specialisation in one or more disability-specific areas" (Para 46, p. 28).

The evidence from the interviewed pupils with disabilities confirmed the need for both pre-service and in-service professional development and links between the two. The pupils stressed the shortage of specialist support teachers, resource centres, and teaching and learning materials.

9.3 Research question 2: How do schools (teachers and head teachers) implement the policy regarding the inclusion of pupils with disabilities in secondary schools?

Ball's policy trajectory model was regarded as a tool for analysis. As such, Ball acknowledged that the enactment of policy into practice is complex, and is often qualified by personal values and struggles with expectations that may appear contradictory amidst constraints (Ball, 1994, Ball, 2009). In this process, Ball's model entails compromises and secondary adjustments, using available capacities. In

the countries of the South, where resources are often inadequate, the realisation of the ISFs may have been compromised. Much as the teachers may wish to realise the values of inclusion, they can only do so according to their capacity, strengths and limitations that they may have.

Indeed Ball's insights were largely exemplified in this study. The enactment of IE policy by teachers and headteachers was characterised by use of skills gained from general teacher training, supported by primary school specialist teachers and a determination to deliver education for all pupils including those with disabilities. Classroom observations indicated that teachers' skills acquired from general training, such as the ability to vary teacher talk tasks, led to oral discussions and debate at whole class, group, pair and one to one level and this helped the realisation of the principle of valuing diversity in order to suit the needs of a pupil with disability. In this way, the teachers and head teachers made adjustments to implement IE policy, drawing on generalist skills gained from their pre-service training.

However, there was no uniformity in the delivery of IE at the classroom level, where the determination to realise the goals and values of inclusion were characterised by dilemma and frustration. For example, there was a dilemma with regard to the meaning of the principle of non-discrimination in practice, as exemplified by seating arrangements in classrooms. The evidence from classroom observations indicated a common teaching style and planning but there was a lack of uniformity in responding to the needs of pupils with disabilities. This depended on personal teachers' efforts, nature of the subjects, type of learning activities and, the pro-activity of the pupils with disabilities.

The dilemmas of teachers appeared to be caused by capacity-related shortcomings for effective delivery of IE. For example, the teachers lacked training in SNE and knowledge of alternative communication systems of instructions such as sign language and Braille. There was a dilemma regarding how to deliver a lesson in classrooms where there were students with various disabilities, for although VI was the most common form of disability, there was great diversity in learning needs. Findings from the *élites* revealed their understanding of the importance of training of secondary school teachers in SNE for effective delivery of IE. The evidence from the surveyed teachers revealed teachers' lack of training in SNE, with a majority holding only general training in educational theory, pedagogy and methods. Teachers linked workload burdens with their perceived low capacities to deliver IE. The teachers underlined that the SNE pupils needed more attention and adjustments to teaching, which accounted for much of the workload.

These findings corroborate the findings reported in the earlier works of Eleweke and Rodda (2004) that lack of initial teacher-training was a major cause of failure to deliver IE in the countries of the South.

Furthermore, the findings confirm the earlier findings reported for the countries of the North which revealed lack of appropriate training in SNE among teachers in mainstream schools. For example, Florian and Rouse's (2001) study in English schools revealed that 78% of teachers reported that they did not receive any specialised training in SNE within the past five years before the study was conducted. Avramidis (2002); Peters (2003), Winter (2006); and MacBeath (2006)

found that lack of initial teacher-training respectively for Northern Ireland and England a major cause of failure to deliver effective IE.

Consequently, in this study, training in SNE and greater specialist support were mentioned by the teachers as key strategies to improve the delivery of IE and reduce workloads. For, indeed, the findings from the surveyed teachers indicated that few teachers received support with regard to a pupil with disability. Teachers' desired specialist support during teaching time that included: the provision of teaching and learning materials/resources; support from SNE teachers; training and orientation in SNE; use of sign language and interpreting services.

There is a general agreement in the literature that states that support for teachers is essential for effective implementation of inclusive education (Mittler, 2000; Booth and Ainscow, 2002; Ainscow, Booth and Dyson, 2006). In some countries, however, such support has been noted as inadequate (Farrell, 1997; Sebba and Sachdev, 1997 cited in Mittler, 2000:124). Specifically in countries of the South, Abosi, (1996) and Eleweke and Rodda (2004) have found lack of support in classrooms.

In this study, such constraints, including lack of learning resources, caused some of the surveyed teachers to question whether the teaching or learning in the inclusive classroom was both effective and efficient, especially for pupils with profound or multiple learning needs. There was a certain perception among some of the teachers that such pupils might be slow in learning and that this reduced the general pace of teaching. This indeed put in doubt the feasibility of handling the learning needs of

pupils with profound or complex learning needs in inclusive classrooms as was the views of élites.

The question is raised not only with regard to including pupils with profound and multiple learning needs but also in maintaining the interest and motivation of fast-learning pupils who may feel forced to reduce their pace to accommodate those that are perceived to be slow learners. This dilemma reinforces the argument that there is not much evidence about whether IE is conducive to effective teaching and learning and to realise the objectives of EFA. Lindsay (2003), for example, has argued for the need to take into account the need for effective teaching and learning before accepting the need to adhere to human right principles, such as those associated with inclusion. As Peters (2004, p. 43) has indicated therefore that school reform policy should focus on a unified system that provides all students to have an equal opportunity to reach their maximum potential and that standards need not be lowered for SNE students.

9.4 Research question 3: What are the experiences of teachers and pupils with disabilities in inclusive secondary schools?

As Ball intimates, enacting a policy in the context of practice is a process that involves the social and personal process experiences and attributes of teachers and material processes (Ball, 1994; Ball, 2009). Policies are enacted in material contexts. Enactment of policies, logically, is easier in contexts that have enough money, experienced teachers, cooperative students, and a supportive and conducive environment than in those contexts where pupils have profound learning difficulties,

little money, unfriendly buildings and environment, and inexperienced teachers (Ball, 2009). Such variations are what tend to define the experiences of teachers and pupils in the context of practice. In many of the countries of the South, there are often unfriendly/inaccessible learning environments, shortages of properly trained teachers, lack of proper support, and scarcity of teaching and learning materials.

Ball's view that the social, personal, and material processes are crucial for the enactment of policy was well exemplified in this study. Malawi's overall economic status is that of a low income country (UNDP, 2010). It is, however, a country that has been embracing democracy and human rights principles, as exemplified by a Constitution that contains a Bill of Rights. This means that there are likely to be both positive and negative experiences with regard to IE.

In the study, the reported experiences from the teachers in inclusive schools confirmed signs associated with the country's adoption of human rights principles. The findings also revealed hard-working pupils, eagerness to learn and non-contestation of inclusion on part of teachers, and provision of care from pupils without disabilities for the benefit of pupils with disabilities. Such attributes, largely explain the lack of contestation against inclusion from pupils and teachers in the broad context of practice.

The reported negative experiences of teachers and pupils related, however, could be regarded as obstacles to overcome in the enactment of inclusive education in Malawi's secondary schools. The teachers mentioned lack of training, heavy workloads, lack of support, and inadequate teaching and learning materials as

negative experiences. There were difficulties encountered by teachers in handling the diverse learning needs of pupils with disabilities. Similarly, evidence from the élite interviews and interviewed pupils with disabilities confirmed that there was lack of specialist teachers, learning materials, resource centres, and support as negative experiences of pupils. The pupils themselves further appeared to link negative experiences with ineffective learning. The findings from the surveyed teachers further provided some evidence of isolation, neglect, marginalisation and sidelining, and lack of participation on part of pupils with disabilities, as reported by their teachers. Although these findings may appear as signs of contestations against inclusion, the study established that such exclusion were unwitting. They were the result of the shortage of means to ensure efficient and effective delivery of inclusive education that resulted from inadequacy and lack of teaching and learning materials/resources and perceived discrimination. Teachers' heavy workloads were also reflected in the pupils' complaint that there was lack of additional or extra-time teaching, for the pupils to keep abreast with other pupils who might be fast learners.

Though the shortcomings could be regarded as barriers to the provision of efficient and effective delivery of inclusive education, some of the positive attributes of pupils in the context of practice could be regarded as mitigating the difficulties encountered. The attributes of teachers in valuing diversity, not wanting to discriminate amongst pupils, and their professional approach to their duties determined the positive experiences of both teachers and pupils. Teachers' teaching competence and their appreciation of pupils' good performance were thus given as examples of positive experiences by the pupils. The evidence from the pupils' interviews indicated that they appeared to link positive experiences with effective

learning. For their part, the surveyed teachers perceived pupils' feeling of being integrated, enjoyment of mixing and learning with others, socialisation and interaction and academic performance to contribute to positive experiences of pupils with disabilities.

9.5 Research question 4: What are the views of teachers tasked with the implementation of inclusion policy into practice at school level and the views of pupils with disabilities?

The views of the teachers and pupils indicated outcomes of policy on IE. This is because, as Ball intimates, such views often reflect behavioural changes achieved among teachers and learning achievements and other outcomes (Ball, 2009).

The findings to questions 1 to 3 have been well-illustrated by the attitudes of teachers and pupils in the context of practice, with views in support of the values and goals of inclusion indicating non-contestation, dilemmas, and frustrations, and the desire for improvements. Evidence from the surveyed teachers indicated that the most frequently-occurring advantages of inclusion were socialisation/interaction and learning from each other; promotion of oneness; and equal access to education and opportunities. The evidence from the élites indicated that the values and goals often associated with inclusion were identified as advantages of inclusion. These were: pupils' ability to develop self-independence and self-confidence/reliance; socialisation, interaction and feeling of acceptance; contribution to development; attitudinal change among other pupils; celebration of diversity; avoidance of discrimination; removal of stigma; learning through discovery; and peer support.

In contrast, disadvantages of inclusion were related to discrepancy in benefits enjoyed amongst the diverse groups of pupils with disabilities. Thus the élites highlighted increased workload for teachers and negative attitudes. The evidence from the surveyed teachers further showed that the most frequently-occurring disadvantages of inclusion were inadequacy and lack of learning and teaching materials/resources; inadequate assistance and lack of adequate support; limited and lack of participation; and pupils' slow learning that reduced teaching pace, as noted above.

A similar, somewhat repetitive pattern was observable from the views of the pupils with disabilities. While the pupils had good self-esteem about their hard-working spirit, lack of resources for optimum learning was expressed as a factor militating against inclusion. Thus shortage of specialist teachers and other SNE-related human resources, lack of extra-time for learning, unfriendly/inaccessible school physical environment and distance to school were identified as constraints to implementation of IE. The pupils' tendency to associate what was good about inclusion with learning outcomes was further exemplified by their identification of favourite teachers in the schools as those who taught well. The conclusion of the pupils in terms of the way forward for IE was very telling: those schools needed to be responsive to the needs of pupils with disabilities.

Inadequacy and lack of resources was also revealed in the study on 'the challenge of enhancing inclusive education in the countries of the South' by Eleweke and Rodda's (2002) and in the works of Peters (2004). This study further confirms these findings that revealed the general unfriendliness of the learning environment to

pupils with disabilities. Examples of such studies include Hobbs (1998); Wolffensohn (2002); Peters (2003); Peters' (2004) reported studies on 'IE: an EFA strategy for all children'; Francis and Muthukrishna (2004) and the report of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Education for Persons with Disabilities (2007).

9.6 Research question 5: What are the barriers to learning and participation faced by pupils with disabilities and the strategies that would help Malawi to enable pupils with disabilities reach their full potential in inclusive secondary schools?

The barriers to IE and the strategies that may be required to address them can be grouped according to the three contexts. In line with Ball's trajectory model, all the data sets revealed few barriers in the contexts of influence and text production but very many in the context of practice. In fact, there were no barriers expressed that could be associated with context of influence, largely because there is no political contestation against the ISFs.

In the context of text production, a discourse that reflected the continuing existence of medical model, based on out-dated pieces of legislation was identified as a barrier. The out-of-date Education Act (GoM, 1962) and outmoded discourse based on the Handicapped Persons Act (GoM, 1972) were identified by the élites as barriers that need to be addressed. The existence of such texts in the context of text production provides a form of resistance against the influence of a discourse of inclusion and a social model, acknowledging the need for restructure and accommodation in the environment. The fact that these rights-based texts are law entails that people in the various contexts should comply with them. Hence, although there has been

increasing influence of the social model as exemplified by the post-1994 policy texts, enactment is resisted in practice. Understandably, the strategy to address this barrier was believed to be a revision of the Education Act (GoM, 1962).

In addition, though not mentioned by the *élites*, the surveyed teachers or the interviewed pupils, there are two other barriers in this broad context of text production, as revealed by the documentary analysis of policy and legislative texts. The first is the domination of policy texts that prioritise economic stability and growth rather than equity and effectiveness in education. An example of such a policy text is the MGDS (GoM, 2006). The second is the lack of emphasis on the wider capacity in the South noted by Peters (2004) for building on existing human resource inputs, internal and external to schools, specifically pre-service training and in-service professional development strategies and wider use of resource centres already servicing primary schools.

Most common barriers, as noted in the policy texts, from the *élite* interviews, surveyed teachers, pupil interviews and the classroom observations were also observed with regard to the context of practice. As revealed from the triangulated data sets, the commonest barriers and strategies are those that pertain to effectiveness in teaching and learning and availability of material resources. These factors, as observed, pose the greatest and most common challenges to the enactment of IE in the context of practice. They are also the most significant factors for the discrepancies or mismatches between the ideals expressed in the context of influence and the struggles, experiences, and realities in the context of practice. The literature reviewed in Chapter Two also confirmed a mismatch between policy and practice

(i.e. Dyson, 1999, Dyson and Forlin 1999 and UNESCO, 2002 in the countries of the North and UNESCO, 2002 and Eleweke and Rodda, 2002, and Peters, 2004 in the countries of the South).

These suggestions show that teachers and pupils in the context of practice consider that the reversal of the factors that constitute barriers can become solutions for the effective implementation of inclusive education in Malawi's secondary schools. Although these suggestions might appear doable, they have an underlying barrier in the Malawian context: all of them, with the exception of spending guidelines, require greater economic resources, which is a barrier identified by most of the élites with regard to the enactment of inclusive education policy.

9.7 The Broad Question: 'What is the policy-to-practice contexts for inclusion of pupils with disabilities in Malawi's secondary schools?'

Following its initial formulation, Ball has elaborated and further developed his policy trajectory model. Ball (2009) has argued that all the contexts can "be 'nested' into each other." Within the broad context of practice, for example, there could be a context of influence, context of text production, outcome and policy action. This means that there can be competing versions of policy within a particular context, each occupying a space and realizable across time. The implication is that it is possible to think of policy as having speed, involving both time and space (ibid).

In this connection, the answers to the five specific questions for this study provide an answer to the broad question within the trajectory of the IE policies for Malawi's

secondary schools. In the context of influence, it is possible to notice both the context of text production, the context of practice, outcome and policy action. The context of text production is represented by ISFs that act as a context of influence in influencing the formulation of standards on IE. The context of practice is represented by the increasing participation of people with disabilities and teachers in the formulation of policy.

In all three policy contexts, the discourse of disability was contested with an educational or pedagogical discourse. Though still present, evidence suggests that the disability discourse seems to be in decline. There is, however, an apparent lack of a challenge to a social model of disability on which the ISFs are largely based. In the overall context of influence, there is no contestation against the ISFs. This does not mean, however, that the social model is accepted uncritically. Social inclusion of pupils with disabilities is unlikely to be achieved until some redistribution of resources takes place. Primary concerns of economic growth and stability rather than inclusive values and principles take precedence of IE.

The broad context of text production is measured against ISFs, which are not contested at the broad context of influence in the Malawi's situation. Despite this privileged position of the ISFs, the overriding influence is still from competing texts that promote economic growth, such as the MGDS (GoM, 2006). Responsiveness to IE in the broad context of practice is limited by priorities related to economic growth and not equity in education. Ironically, both goals are desired by those in the broad context of influence. However, economic growth takes precedent when resources are scarce. Thus the MDGS pillars are all related to economic growth, as perceived by

the Government. Though regarded as important, education is not among the priorities that the Government identified in its overarching strategy. The MGDS states that its “six key priority areas are: agriculture and food security; irrigation and water development; transport infrastructure development; energy generation and supply; integrated rural development; and prevention and management of nutrition disorders, HIV and AIDS”.

Within the context of practice, again, all the types of contexts exist and compete (Ball, 2009). The context of text production is exemplified by school IE policy, informed by rights from context of influence, inclusive teaching pedagogy in context of practice. Thus teaching practices are political and policy is practice, as noted by Fulcher (1989), and occurs at all levels. But teaching resources (material and personnel) are in short supply, mainly because the broad contexts of influence and text production cannot prioritise resources for IE. There is no contestation from teachers, head teachers, and pupils regarding IE. This is despite that the ISFs are not well-known in this context. The struggles of those that have to enact the policy have resulted in some questioning the real influence of the ISFs. This is because having chosen to espouse the values and goals of inclusion, the practitioners and pupils in this context largely expect those goals and values to be realised. As they do not contest IE but seek to realise its goals and values, practitioners and pupils in this context deploy their attributes and capacities, such as general teacher training skills, to strive for good learning outcomes and positive experiences.

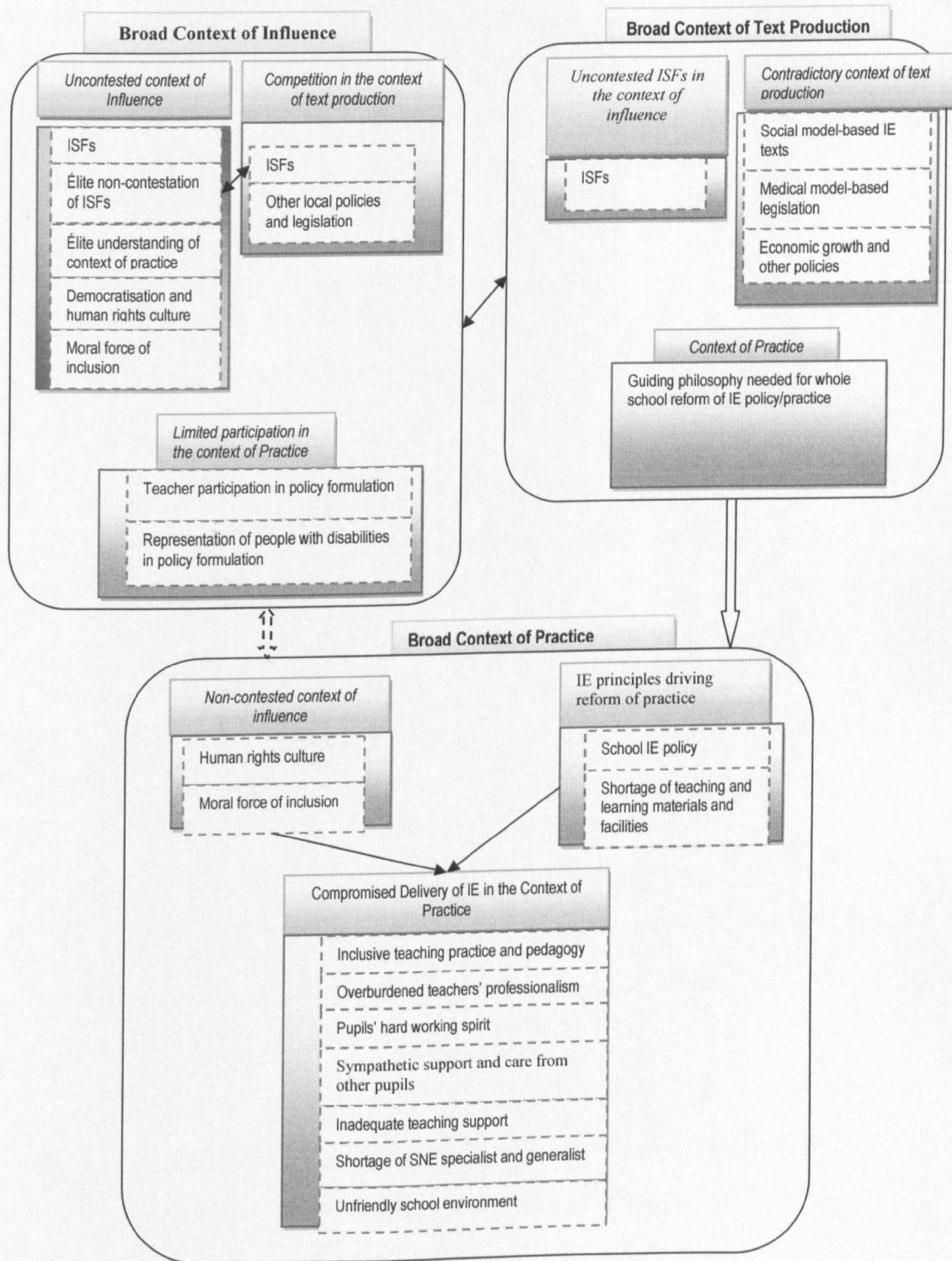
While there are examples of positive experiences with regard to social inclusion for pupils with disabilities, there are negative experiences in relation to effective

teaching and learning. The experiences of teachers and pupils in this context can be described as frustrated. Although IE is well-received in Malawi's broad context of secondary school education, there is frustration because capacity to provide specialist personnel, special teaching and learning materials and support, in other words pedagogy, are very low due in part to inadequate resources allocated. Élités in the context of influence understand this and empathise with those in the broad context of practice. Such lack of capacity makes worse the longstanding question about whether IE can address the learning needs of those with profound and complex learning needs, without prejudicing the learning needs of the majority in inclusive schools. If Malawi's IE policy 'fades away', according to Ball or loses drive, it will not be as a result of competition against it in the context of practice. Instead, it will be because that context lacks sufficient means to realise the policy. So far, the hope is in the good will of teachers to strive for inclusion even with the limited attributes and resources that they possess. In the end, IE policy is the outcome of struggles that are political, moral and educational. As noted by Fulcher (1989) policy and practices surrounding disability are the outcomes of complex interactions between national policy and its strategies, and institutional conditions at various levels. Legislation can require compliance but it is more difficult to ensure social and educational inclusion. Perhaps this is a matter of pedagogy, for special educators and those who train them to introduce a more inclusive and democratic curriculum for all.

Figure 9.1 which summarises the current policy-to-practice contexts regarding IE in Malawi's secondary schools, provides further insights from the perspective of Ball's trajectory model. The dotted arrow indicates the weak linkage between the broad context of influence and the context of practice. Although the relationship between

the context of text production and context of practice is stronger, the one-directional arrow underlines the fact that the context of practice does not influence the context of text production.

Figure 9.1: The policy-to-practice contexts for inclusion of pupils with disabilities and the experience of teachers in Malawi's secondary schools



In addition to the points noted about the policy-to-practice contexts for inclusion policy in Malawi's inclusive secondary school, the following points can be emphasised:

- There is top-down influence between the contexts of influence, on the one hand, and the context of practice;
- The linkage between the context of influence and practice is weak, exemplified only by the participation of some teachers in policy formulation and élites sympathetic understanding of the context of practice; and
- The context of practice nested in the context of text production requires whole-school policy, with IE a principle guiding school reform/ restructuring to enact national policy.

9.8 Recommendations on Effectiveness and Efficiency for Malawi

The problematisation of inclusion often involves two arguments, as noted earlier. The first is whether IE can achieve effective teaching and learning for all. The second is how resources can be addressed to realise the values and goals of IE. Best practices from countries of both the North and the South exist, from which Malawi can tap to improve the realisation of its IE policy. For example Peters (2004) has distilled practices that can help address the problem of shortage of resources for inclusion in countries of the South. She has noted that in Mozambique, for instance, teacher training encompasses building on the expertise of people with disabilities to train teachers, such as deaf adults teaching small classes of deaf children in Maputo, where severe teacher shortage exist. In the USA, peer tutoring programs have

emerged shown great promise for providing efficiency and effectiveness in accelerating the academic progress of both those being tutored and the tutors themselves. Kisanji (1999) notes that itinerant Community-based Rehabilitation Program (CBRs) workers provide Braille lessons in schools, and attend teacher staff meetings to assist in planning and curriculum adaptation. Okwaput (2001) recommends that all children receive training in sign language to promote social inclusion and a positive climate in the school.

A common trend has emerged in Europe whereby special schools are transformed into resource centres. Such centres provide training and courses for teachers and other professionals, develop and disseminate materials and methods, and support mainstream schools and parents; provide short-term or part-time help for individual students, and support students in entering the labour market (Peters, 2004).

Another area in which Malawi can improve its delivery of IE is through the development of an appropriate inclusive curriculum and pedagogy. A study carried out by OECD between 1995 and 1998 in eight countries from three regions (North America, Europe and the Pacific), as reported by Peters (2004, p. 12) found that "from organisational, curriculum and pedagogical perspectives, given certain safeguards, there is no reason to maintain generally segregated provision for disabled students in public education systems".

Such notable best practices are a combination of practical strategies that require a mix of down-up and top-down initiatives. For example, the involvement of people with disabilities in the actual delivery of inclusive education in Mozambique, the

participation of peer tutors in the USA, and the provision of Braille lessons by itinerant CBR workers in Kenya entails creating space for community or school-level initiatives. The suggestion by the OECD for the development of an appropriate inclusive curriculum and the transformation special schools into resource centres are examples of measures that are mainly top-down in their drive. The interrelatedness of the contexts of influence, text production, and practices and the existence of types of these contexts in each other underlines the case for a combination of top-down and down-up strategies in the delivery of inclusive education.

There have been positive developments in Malawi whereby people with disabilities and teachers are increasingly participating in policy formulation. The activities, however, are top-down in initiation and direction. This study recommends that a proper response to the context of practice for Malawi should involve practical measures that are a combination of top-down and down-up teaching and learning activities. At the same time, schools vary in the extent to which they include the disabled and schools themselves are arenas for independent decision-making, as noted by Fulcher (1989). If all policy is the outcome of struggle, distinctions between policy and practice, and curriculum implementation may be blurred and responsibility lie as much with schools as Government.

In addition, IE requires a conducive learning environment. Peters (2004, p. 40) has argued that “physical access to school buildings is an essential pre-requisite.” In addition, “promoting physical access to buildings without addressing the various barriers that make school practically inaccessible will not be effective.” Such other factors include “the language and format of instructions”. Hence “sign language for

the deaf, Braille reading or large print texts for blind students, alternative formats of assessment” are all necessary practical measures to make learning not only available, but also accessible. Regarding accessibility in this way entails the identification and removal of barriers against learning. This study therefore recommends that barriers that make practical access to learning should be targets of a mix of top-down and down-up actions and activities.

9.8 Pedagogical, policy, and theoretical implications and recommendations

The recommended strategies by the élites, teachers and pupils and the implications of those recommendations and experiences have pedagogical, policy, and theoretical implications. Pedagogically, there is a need to rethink the content and delivery of teacher education in Malawi. The issues are not just about increasing the number of SNE teachers, but producing a critical mass of teachers that have skills to respond to the diverse needs of all pupils in a holistic and effective manner. Such training of teachers may have to build on current training, which reasonably equips teachers to vary their mostly participatory methods. One lesson from the reported experience of the teachers is that support from specialist teachers is well-appreciated. However, more support in preparation and delivery of classes regarding pupils with disabilities is required. As the findings from pupils, teachers, and élites all suggested, deployment of both generalist and specialist teachers for the effective delivery of inclusive education in Malawi’s secondary schools is required.

Policy-wise, Ball’s trajectory model, underlining the interrelations between the three broad contexts, has provided a useful tool for analysis of the policy-to-practice context. The common thread that can help more strongly connect these contexts for

better enactment of inclusive education is the influence of EFAs, which has been an aspiration in all the three contexts, as exemplified by Malawi's implementation of a policy premised on universal basic education. The need for the contexts of influence and text production to be more responsive to the context of practice is important with a great recognition that policy, particularly IE curriculum policy, is made at all levels. This means a devolvement of IE policy to the local level. In Malawi's case, although there is no contestation against IE in the context of influence and despite the understanding of the context of practice that élites have, the context of text production requires the removal of legislative and policy texts that are based on the medical model and the existence of a strategy for the initial and in-service training of teachers and other staff in the context of practice.

As the context of text production is where overarching texts underlining macro-economic stability exist, élites and others in the context of influence need to attempt to influence the development and implementation of economic or development policy texts such as the MGDS to ensure compatibility and conduciveness to IE. Such attempts have to include a resolve to redistribute educational resources towards IE and recognition that resource allocation is needed for mobilisation of IE, with a focus on training, teaching and learning materials, and provisions of specialist support. Equally important is the need for policy-makers to review current policies with a view to balance the delivery of IE throughout the education structure, from pre-school to tertiary levels. With regard to the MGDS, the country will review it in 2010, with a view to having a new MGDS from 2011. So far, attempts to influence policy-making have been predominantly based on the social model. The social model though, as noted, is weak in answering questions about the need to respond to each

child's within learning factors (Lindsay, 2003) and the overall effectiveness in teaching and learning. The interactionist model, as noted plausibly attempts to address these problems. As they review the current policy texts such as the MGDS, this study recommends that policy-makers in Malawi will need to consider learning and using the interactionist approach to the delivery of IE.

Theory-wise, this study contributes to a number of insights. A theory and discourse of disability is exclusionary. While recognising the problems associated with the implementation of inclusion globally and, more specifically, in countries of the South, the study suggests that it is possible to improve the delivery of IE in resource-poor countries such as Malawi. This can only be achieved by recognising historical, social, financial and contextual influences on the theory, discourse, values and practices associated with disability. Measures that can help improve the delivery of IE in this regard include redesigning teacher training curricular to ensure more responsiveness to the context of practice, and space for bottom-up devolved participatory initiatives in the actual delivery of IE. However, as the study shows, from the suggestion of the pupils, there is need for a discourse on pedagogy and teaching that can ensure an appropriate pedagogical approach to the delivery of lessons in inclusive classrooms by well-trained and competent teachers. Inclusion is thus an ethical, political and education and, as such, has to address the discrepancies in the learning needs throughout the education system, and not just at primary school level, as is currently the case in Malawi.

Ball's policy trajectory model has been a useful analytical research tool for this study. His later elaboration of the model to underline the possibility of various types

of contexts within a broad context helps to explain much in Malawi's situation. Related to practice in Malawi's secondary schools, ignorance or lack of knowledge of the nature and content of ISFs is a factor that needs to be highlighted for a proper response to the teaching and learning needs in the context of practice.

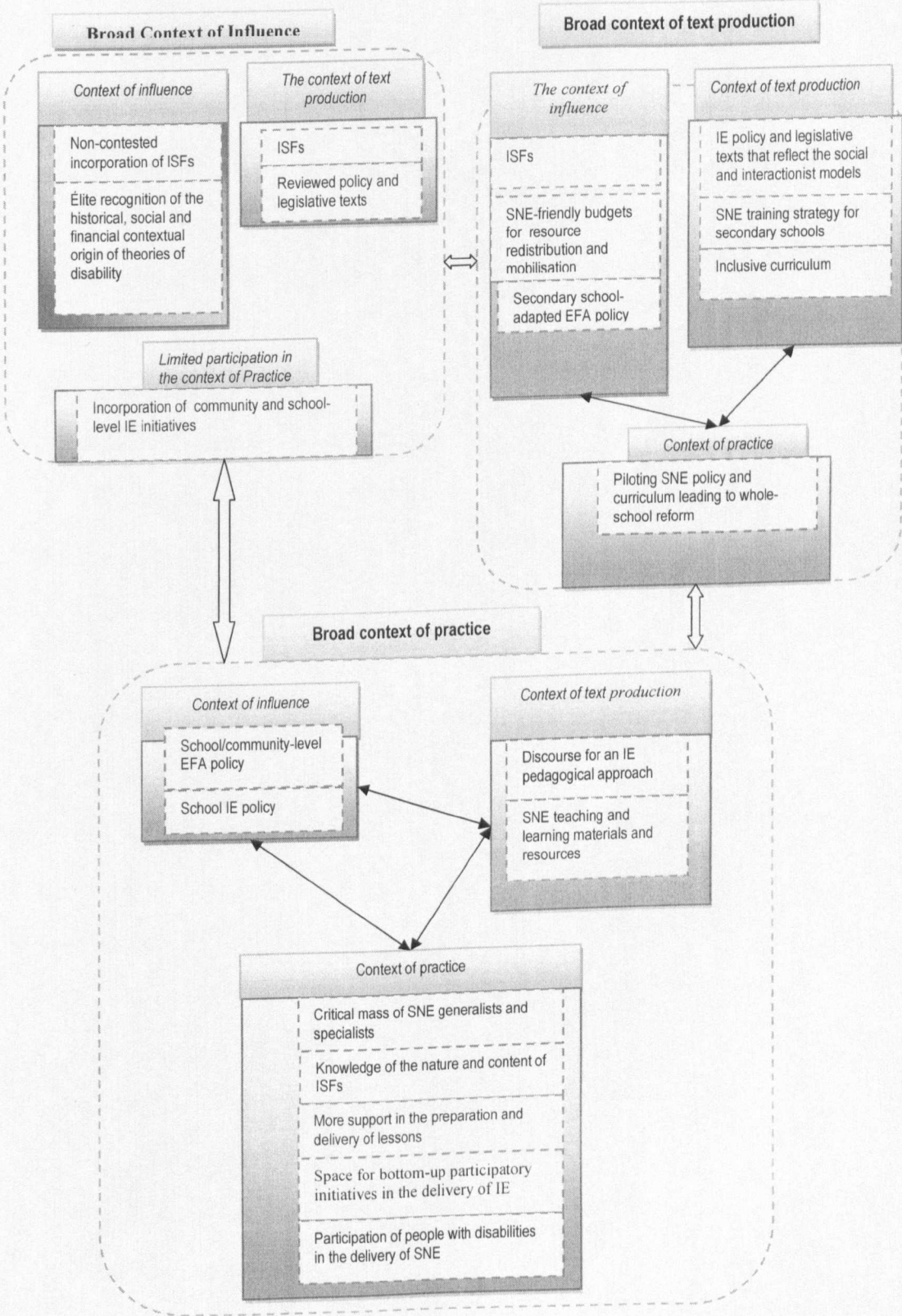
In addition, although Ball (1994) had posited that there is often contestation in the three contexts, the concept of contestation, in Malawi's situation, the contestations do not appear to exist against the ISFs in the contexts of influence and practice. This is partly because of the moral force of the goals and values of inclusion. The Malawi case shows that the contestation can come from the combined body of legislative and policy texts that taken together are historical as well as political and in need of transformation. This may apply to other countries as well, from either the South or North. The fact that contestation may come from existing and developing policy and legislative texts underlines the need for an approach to the review and development of policy that has social, financial and political dimensions. The utilisation of Ball's trajectory model has helped to provide an understanding of the tensions and dilemmas within broad contexts of policy that can be made at different levels from national and international level to school and classroom level. It has also illuminated the political nature of practice and the struggles from which it emerges.

These recommendations pertain to all three broad contexts. Since each type of context is represented in each broad context, the recommendations that may help address the barriers experienced in the implementation of inclusive education policy are in each of the broad contexts. This underlines that though Ball's model entails a policy trajectory, the three contexts are closely interlinked in the way they should

influence each other to address barriers against IE. This underlines the need for responsiveness among the three broad contexts. Since the context of practice is where policy is realised or fails, this thesis argues that there is a strong need for the broad contexts of influence and text production to be responsive to the context of practice, which is often represented by teachers and pupils experiences and voices. Figure 9.2 on the next page illustrates these points.

Unlike in Figure 9.1, in Figure 9.2 represents the broad contexts which within dotted boxes underline the need for these contexts to be responsive to each other, instead of each being viewed as independent. The presence of a dotted line in this figure emphasises the aspiration rather than the current reality, where the context of practice does not influence the context of text production. The figure uses dual arrows underlining the need for inter-influence between and within each broad context.

Figure 9.2: A suggested model for the effective and efficient delivery of IE in Malawi's secondary schools



In this study, a range of proposed strategies to address such barriers included:

- Some redistribution of budgetary allocation to secondary education to ease introduction of IE.
- Provision of some spending guidelines to ensure continuum of support and services to match continuum of SNE present in every secondary school, as noted in Salamanca Statement and SNE Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994);
- Introduction of teacher training and professional development strategies and SNE curriculum throughout the country;
- Introduction of inclusive pre-service teachers' training curriculum;
- Adoption of an appropriate training model for all teachers in SNE and orientation to the issues of SNE, for example, a trainer of trainers for the regions;
- The extension of resource centres utilising existing special school expertise and existing primary school resource centres;
- Deployment of special teachers to support general education teachers in cluster schools;
- Modification of the existing secondary school infrastructure with restructuring and whole-school reform of policy, methods and resource allocation and governance;
- Construction of libraries and resource centres and equipping them with adequate up-to-date teaching and learning materials; and
- Procurement and provision of adequate teaching and learning materials/resources.

9.9 *Limitations of the study*

This study has provided an overview of the policy-to-practice contexts and the lived experiences of pupils with disabilities and their teachers in Malawi's inclusive secondary schools. This may have limited the level of in-depth analysis of each context. Nevertheless, the study provided the insight into how policy was formulated, produced into text and implemented in the context of practice, and illuminated the relationship between the contexts and the contestations within these contexts.

This was a small-scale research study. Generalisation of the findings therefore needs to be guarded. Nevertheless, the use of a mixed-methods approach and an effort to utilize both quantitative (though descriptively) and qualitative data mitigated the constraints arising from the size of the sample. Moreover, this allowed the findings from the various methods to be triangulated by capturing the policy-to-practice contexts from multiple perspectives, using a variety of data sources and methods. By these means, competing interpretations of the contexts were revealed.

Every effort was made to ensure credibility to the study from the research design to the analysis of the findings and the reporting of the findings. Threats to validity and reliability of the data were mitigated by purposive sampling of the research participants and research sites. The researcher validated with the participants the findings of the study. Threats to validity at the stage of data reporting were minimised by making only those claims sustainable by the data (Cohen et al, 2000) and subjecting findings to peer debriefing. These procedures demanded reflexivity through data gathering and reporting so that those involved had a role in checking

and agreeing interpretation of evidence. Throughout the research process, it was attempted to provide a valid interpretation of what the policy-to-practice contexts revealed.

The study grappled with the challenges of sensitive ethical issues. The particular ethical issues concerned the fact that the study focused on IE and pupils with disabilities. Bines (1995) argues that dilemmas, personal and social values and vested interests are issues that the researcher always has to confront.

In this study, these issues were a challenge. Concern for ethical issues at both the planning and implementation phase ensured the whole research process and its implications was considered closely in advance in order to ensure maximum protection of those involved.

9.10 Overall Conclusion

Malawi has been keen to adopt policies on education that are in line with ISFs, as exemplified by its adoption and relative success in implementation of EFA for basic education. There is still much work though that has to be done with regard to secondary and tertiary education, especially concerning pupils and students with disabilities.

This study has revealed that the disparities that exist between the delivery of IE in primary schools and secondary schools in Malawi are not based on the contestations against inclusion as such. Rather, the disparities emanate from failure to redistribute

and allocate enough resources for secondary IE and to develop holistic policies that adequately respond to teaching and learning needs in a realistic fashion. The problems that exist in the implementation of IE do not originate from resistance from élites, teachers or pupils. Instead, they emanate from having an inclusion policy developed in the context of other contradictory policy and legislative texts, such as the Handicapped Persons Act, that may be based on the traditional medical model of disability or an overarching goal for macro-economic stability, when inclusion has not become a real priority. The social model with its emphasis on the educational context appears to have been so embraced in Malawi that there is much willingness for inclusion to succeed. Some of the recent policies on inclusion and education have allowed decentralisation and the participation of people from the contexts of practice, such as teachers and those with disabilities. However, the policies developed do not reflect how the two critical issues can be addressed: how to make IE more effective for both secondary pupils with disabilities and those without disabilities; and how to lever and redistribute resources to ensure sufficient learning and teaching materials and appropriate training. An interactionist model offers an approach to address the question about how to make inclusive education for all pupils, as it attempts to help address the child's 'within learning factors' (Lindsay, 2003) from the perspective of pedagogy and a more inclusive democratic curriculum. It is clear that there is a need for a teacher training strategy that prepares teachers adequately to respond to the diverse learning needs of all pupils whilst increasing pedagogical skills to vary participatory methods. However, such a strategy, if and when it is developed in Malawi, has to factor in bottom-up measures in the delivery of IE. Further, IE that adequately responds to all situations, attributes, and material

context of Malawi's inclusive secondary schools can build on the existing goodwill of élites, teachers, and pupils to have effective IE in Malawi's secondary schools.

In conclusion, this study underlines that a strategy that would help address both these intransigent problems for countries of the South is to have a mixture of top-bottom and bottom-up practical measures directed against experienced barriers to effective and efficient delivery of IE. This entails not just general responsiveness to the experiences and views in the broad context of practice. Instead, the responsiveness has to provide space for bottom-up initiatives for all the three broad contexts of influence, text production, and practice.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: a Sample of How the Qualitative Data Were Analysed

Phases 2 and 3

4.4 The perceived advantages of inclusion

The perceived advantages of inclusion	Code	Theme
E1 MOE, DD: The interaction gives them <u>opportunities to learn from their colleagues</u> They <u>are able to develop self-confidence</u> in what they do.	Opportunities to learn from their colleagues Ability to develop confidence	Learning through discovery Ability to develop confidence
E2 Chief Disability Awareness Officer: The <u>resources are shared</u> and <u>non-disabled children develop positive attitudes</u> towards children with disabilities	Celebration of diversity Attitudinal change	Celebration of diversity Attitudinal change
E3 Centre for Learning Difficulties, DD: Pupils with disabilities have <u>a chance of socialising and interacting with pupils without disabilities</u> . It is <u>a natural setting</u> where all pupils ought to be. <u>Pupils know and appreciate the differences among themselves</u> and celebrate "yes we are people although we have differences". If Government wants to develop policy, it will just be for all capturing all differences, diversity that is there.	Socialisation and interaction Learning through discovery Celebration of diversity	Socialisation and interaction Learning through discovery Celebration of diversity
E4 Centre for the Deaf, DD: These <u>pupils will also be supported by the other pupils</u> without hearing impairment. The pupils with HI will also <u>support the development of the nation</u> when they finish their education.	Peer support Contribution to development	Peer support Contribution to development
E5 Centre for VI, DD: Inclusion is <u>making people with SNs to understand how they can perform in a different setting</u> . Inclusion is now <u>leading to self-independence</u> . If they are excluded, they think that someone should do something for	Making people with SNs to understand how they can perform in a different setting	Learning through discovery

<p>them.</p> <p>They <u>develop the spirit of creativeness</u>, for instance at first pupils with VI relied on being guided but in inclusive setting, they try to identify the points that will lead them to different places, for example, if I am here, I should be able to go here and there. They therefore develop a sense of smell, hearing that enable them to survive in an inclusive setting.</p> <p>When they are included they discover that they can also perform and beat those who are 'normal'.</p> <p>Some thought that those with VI can only become teachers but now they can see that they can also become something else.</p> <p>Those without VI are also accepting, work with and support those with VI</p> <p>People used to fear that if you stay close to someone with VI you will also eventually be with VI but because of inclusion policy, <u>people have changed their attitudes</u>.</p> <p>Parents used to be overprotective of their children with VI but with inclusion policy the <u>parents have seen that their children can also do something even if they are not there for them</u>.</p>	<p>Leading to independence Develop the spirit of creativeness</p> <p>Learning through discovery</p> <p>Attitudinal change</p> <p>Stigma is removed</p> <p>Attitudinal change</p>	<p>Self-independence Creative and skills development Learning through discovery</p> <p>Attitudinal change</p> <p>Stigma is removed Attitudinal change for parents</p>
<p>E6 UNESCO, Programme officer for Education and Deputy Executive Secretary: They will be <u>able to depend on themselves and contribute to the development of the nation</u></p> <p>More people are slowly changing their negative attitudes towards people with disabilities</p>	<p>Self-independence/reliance Contribution to development of nation Attitudinal change</p>	<p>Self-reliance Contribution to development of nation Attitudinal change</p>
<p>E7 MOEVT, Director of Education Planning: <u>Social integration</u>: likewise you also allow this person to be a whole human being; he/she does not feel under-rated from that capacity.</p> <p>The handicapped have a feeling of pity and when they are included <u>this feeling is removed and discrimination is also avoided</u>.</p> <p>They are <u>given an opportunity to be talked to just like the way others are talked to in the inclusive setting</u>.</p>	<p>Social integration</p> <p>Stigma is removed Discrimination is avoided</p> <p>Non-discrimination</p>	<p>Social integration</p> <p>Stigma is removed Discrimination is avoided</p>

E8 Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA), Executive Director: They become <u>self-reliant</u> and <u>more pupils access higher education</u> .	Self-independence More pupils access higher education.	Self-independence Access to education
E9 MOEVT, SNE Department, Deputy Director: Benefits are diverse: <u>society at large is going to benefit</u> because once you have completed your education, you contribute towards the development of the nation.	Contribution towards the development of the nation	Contribution towards the development of the nation
E10 Northern Education Division Office: Senior Education Methods Advisor: it is important because we are trying to <u>avoid discrimination</u> . We are taking everyone on board. We are saying everyone is equal. We may say some one is ok today but the issues of disability, you may be normal one day and you may be disabled or challenged. It is un foreseeable. Some people are born with these. To some they come while someone is growing up. You can not foresee when you become disabled. So it is important to take everyone on board because even those who are able bodied today will find themselves with physical challenges at any time. We are saying everyone is useful.	Avoiding discrimination	Discrimination is avoided Attitudinal change
E11 Ministry of Education, South West Education Division: Senior Education Methods Advisor: <u>They forget about their status</u> and <u>feel accepted in schools</u> . They do not feel like outcasts as before.	Stigma removed Feeling of acceptance	Stigma is removed Feeling of acceptance

Grouping all the related issues according to the main themes: Phases 4 and 5

4.4 The perceived advantages of inclusion

The perceived advantages of inclusion	Code	Theme (phase 5)
E1 They <u>are able to develop self-confidence</u> in what they do.	able to develop self-confidence	Pupils ability to develop self-confidence and self-independence /reliance
E6 They will be <u>able to depend on themselves</u>	able to depend on themselves leading to self-independence	
E5 Inclusion is now <u>leading to self-independence</u> . If they are excluded, they think that someone should do something for them.	become self-reliant	
E8 They <u>become self-reliant</u>		
E3 Pupils with disabilities have <u>a chance</u>	a chance of	Socialisation,

<p><u>of socialising and interacting with pupils without disabilities.</u> E3 It is a <u>natural setting</u> where all pupils ought to be.</p> <p>E7 <u>Social integration</u>: likewise you also allow this person to be a whole human being; he/she does not feel under-rated from that capacity.</p> <p>E11 <u>They forget about their status and feel accepted in schools.</u> They do not feel like outcasts as before.</p>	<p>socialising and interacting</p> <p>Social integration</p>	<p>interaction and feeling of acceptance</p>
<p>E4 The pupils with HI will also <u>support the development of the nation</u> when they finish their education.</p> <p>E6 They will be <u>able to depend on themselves and contribute to the development of the nation</u></p> <p>E9 Benefits are diverse: <u>society at large is going to benefit</u> because once you have completed your education, <u>you contribute towards the development of the nation.</u></p>	<p>Support the development of the nation</p> <p>Contribute to the development of the nation</p> <p>You contribute towards the development of the nation.</p>	<p>Contribution to development</p>
<p>E2 The <u>resources are shared</u> and <u>non-disabled children develop positive attitudes</u> towards children with disabilities</p> <p>E5 Some thought that those with VI can only become teachers but now <u>they can see that they can also become something else.</u></p> <p>E5 People used to fear that if you stay close to someone with VI you will also eventually be with VI but because of inclusion policy, <u>people have changed their attitudes.</u></p> <p>E5 Parents used to be overprotective of their children with VI but with inclusion policy the <u>parents have seen that their children can also do something even if they are not there for them.</u></p> <p>E6 More people are slowly changing their negative attitudes towards people with disabilities</p>	<p>Non-disabled children develop positive attitudes</p> <p>They can see that they can also become something else.</p> <p>People have changed their attitudes.</p> <p>Parents have seen that their children can also do something even if they are not there for them</p> <p>People are slowly changing their negative attitudes</p>	<p>Attitudinal change</p>
<p>E2 The <u>resources are shared</u></p> <p>E3 Pupils <u>know and appreciate the differences among themselves</u> and celebrate "yes we are people although we have differences".</p> <p>E3 If Government wants to develop</p>	<p>Resources are shared</p> <p>Pupils know and appreciate the differences among themselves</p>	<p>Celebration of diversity</p>

policy, it will just be for all capturing all differences, diversity that is there.		
<p>E7 The handicapped have a feeling of pity and when they are included <u>this feeling is removed</u> and <u>discrimination is also avoided</u>.</p> <p>E10 it is important because we are trying to <u>avoid discrimination</u>. We are taking everyone on board. We are saying everyone is equal. We may say some one is ok today but the issues of disability, you may be normal one day and you may be disabled or challenged. It is un foreseeable. Some people are born with these. To some they come while someone is growing up. You can not foresee when you become disabled. So it is important to take everyone on board because even those who are able bodied today will find themselves with physical challenges at any time. We are saying everyone is useful.</p>	Discrimination is also avoided. avoid discrimination	Avoidance of discrimination
<p>E7 The handicapped have a feeling of pity and when they are included <u>this feeling is removed</u></p> <p>E11 <u>They forget about their status</u></p>	<p>This feeling is removed</p> <p>They forget about their status</p>	Stigma is removed
<p>E1 MOE, DD:</p> <p>E1 The interaction gives them <u>opportunities to learn from their colleagues</u></p> <p>E5 They <u>develop the spirit of creativeness</u>, for instance at first pupils with VI relied on being guided but in inclusive setting, they try to identify the points that will lead them to different places, for example, if I am here, I should be able to go here and there. They therefore develop a sense of smell, hearing that enable them to survive in an inclusive setting.</p> <p>E5 When they are included <u>they discover that they can also perform and beat those who are 'normal'</u>.</p> <p>E5 Some thought that those with VI can only become teachers but now <u>they can see that they can also become something else</u>.</p> <p>E5 Inclusion is <u>making people with SNs</u></p>	<p>Opportunities to learn from their colleagues</p> <p>Develop the spirit of creativeness</p> <p>They can see that they can also become something else</p> <p>Making people with SNs to understand how they can perform in a different setting</p>	Learning through discovery

<u>to understand how they can perform in a different setting.</u>		
<p>E4 These pupils will also be supported by the other pupils without hearing impairment.</p> <p>E5 Those without VI work with and <u>support those with VI</u></p>	<p>Pupils will also be supported by the other pupils</p> <p>Support those with VI</p>	Peer support

Appendix 2 for Chapter 4: Élites' Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

Education of Pupils with Disabilities in Malawi's Secondary Schools: Policy, Practice and experiences

I am conducting research on education of pupils with disabilities in Malawi's secondary schools as a requirement for my studies. The research tries to explore the policy through to the practice context and experiences of teachers and pupils with disabilities. The aim of the study is to help influence policy development and practice in order to improve the delivery of education particularly for pupils with disabilities in conventional secondary schools in Malawi. The interview will take about 30 - 40 minutes to complete. The first few questions will collect factual background information.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Name of organisation/Ministry/school

1.2 Gender

Male	Female
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is your current position?

SECTION 2: CONTEXT OF INFLUENCE

2.1 In what ways, if at all, do you think views and definitions of disability and special education have changed over the last ten years?

Do you think that all categories of special educational needs (e.g. moderate learning difficulties, moderate behavioural difficulties, sensory impairment-visual, sensory impairment-hearing, speech and language difficulty, dyslexia, language and communication, physical impairment, epilepsy etc) should be included in secondary schools? If not, which ones should not be included and why?

What do you think has been the major influence for change in secondary school inclusion?

3.3 In your opinion do you think that there have been tensions and contradictions within changing policy for inclusion?

SECTION 3: CONTEXT OF POLICY TEXT PRODUCTION

3.1 Given the international changes in policy on social inclusion and rights to participation, what is your opinion of inclusion policy in Malawi?

SECTION 4: CONTEXT OF PRACTICE

What in your view are the current training requirements relating to inclusion for:

New entrants to secondary school teaching profession?

Experienced staff?

How in your opinion, have secondary school teachers responded to changes to inclusion policy over the last ten years?

What has been the impact, if any, of inclusion policy on standards of secondary schooling?

4.4 What in your opinion are the advantages of including children and young people with disabilities in secondary schools?

4.5 What are the barriers to learning and participation faced by pupils with disabilities in Malawi's secondary schools?

4.6 How can these barriers to learning and participation be addressed to enable pupils with disabilities in Malawi's secondary schools reach their full potential?

Do you think the particular challenges for including girls with disabilities are at all different from including boys with disabilities? If so, can you say why this is the case?

How might the challenges be addressed?

Thank you very much for your time rendered to answer

Appendix 3 for Chapter Five: Documentary Analysis Guidelines

- (1) The nature and purpose for the produced texts
- (2) The text production process.
- (3) Whether the texts include the tenets/principles of inclusion such as non-discrimination, participation and valuing diversity.
- (4) The constraints and contradictions or 'spaces' that such texts carry (Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992).

Appendix 4 for Chapter Six: Questionnaire

Education of Pupils with Disabilities in Malawi's Secondary Schools: Policy, Practice and Experiences

I am conducting research on education of pupils with disabilities in Malawi's secondary schools as a requirement for my studies. The research tries to explore the policy through to the practice context and experiences of teachers and pupils with disabilities in Malawi's secondary schools. The aim of the study is to help influence policy development and practice in order to improve the delivery of inclusive education particularly for pupils with disabilities in secondary schools in Malawi. The questionnaire will take about 30 - 40 minutes to complete. The first few questions will collect factual background information.

Where appropriate, please tick ☐ the appropriate response.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Name of Secondary School

--

1.2 Gender

Male	Female
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.3 What is the range of your age group? *(Please tick relevant box)*

20-29	<input type="checkbox"/>
30-39	<input type="checkbox"/>
40-49	<input type="checkbox"/>
50+	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.4 What is your current position? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

Head teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deputy head teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Form teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subject teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.5 How many classes do you currently teach? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

Single class	<input type="checkbox"/>
Two classes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Three classes	<input type="checkbox"/>

Four classes	
--------------	--

1.6 What is your current qualification? *(Please tick the relevant box)*

Degree in Education	
General Degree	
Degree in Special Education	
Masters in Education Degree	
General Masters Degree	
Masters in Special Education	
Diploma in Education	
General Diploma	
Diploma in Special Education	
Certificate in Education	
Certificate in Special Education	
General Certificate	
Other (Please specify)	

1.7 Since your original qualifications, have you had any other training in special education? If yes, can you *tick* what additional training/qualifications you have received

Short course	
In-service training	
Certificate	
Diploma	
Degree	
Other (please specify)	

1.8 What do you think about the training that you went through? *(Please tick the appropriate box)*

Very satisfactory	
Satisfactory	
Not very satisfactory	
Not at all satisfactory	

1.9 What is the range of the pupils' age group?

11-13	
14-16	
17-19	
20-22	
Other	

(Specify)

THE INFLUENCE (IF ANY) OF THE INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS/STANDARDS ON INCLUSION POLICY AND PRACTICE IN MALAWI'S SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

SECTION 2: CONTEXT OF INFLUENCE

Chronologically international standards have evolved to embrace the basic human right principle of non-discrimination, participation and human right goal of equality. Everyone therefore has a right to education.

2.1 According to the international standards on education for all, an educational system should be designed and educational programs implemented to take into account of the wide diversity of all pupils (*Please tick the appropriate box*).

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 3: CONTEXT OF TEXT PRODUCTION

3.1 To what extent have the International frameworks/Standards on the education of children with disabilities influenced the policy of inclusion and practice regarding the education of pupils with disabilities in Malawi's Secondary schools? (*Please tick the appropriate box*).

Very influential	<input type="checkbox"/>
Influential	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not very influential	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not at all influential	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.2 Please say more about your answer

SECTION 4: CONTEXT OF PRACTICE

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INCLUSION POLICY

4.1 Here is a list of special educational needs (SEN) those you may have Encountered as a teacher. Please tick the ones that you have taught:

Moderate learning difficulties	
Moderate behavioural difficulties	
Sensory impairment-visual	
Sensory impairment-hearing	
Speech and language difficulty	
Dyslexia	
Language and communication	
Physical impairment	
Epilepsy	
Other (please name)	

4.2 With reference to the special educational needs listed above, have there been any significant changes in the types of special educational needs you have encountered and in the number of pupils included over the last few years?

Yes	
No	

4.3 PUPIL WITH DISABILITY CASE STUDY

Please think of one pupil you have taught in the last few years with a special educational need. Please pick a student whose contact with you has been quite a typical experience. Numbers 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6 relate to this pupil with disability.

Pupil's details

Description of pupil's special educational need	
Level of pupil's assessed need	
Any other outside school support received by the pupil (please detail any sessions in offsite unit or other school)	

4.4 SUPPORT WHEN PREPARING TO RECEIVE THIS PUPIL

(a) When preparing to receive this pupil did you have.....? (Please tick relevant boxes)

	Yes	No
Discussions with previous teachers?		
Discussions with specialist teachers?		
Discussions with Montfort Education Centres for visual and hearing impairment and learning difficulties?		
Meeting with parents?		
Access to documents and/ or records?		
Access to appropriate literature?		

Time to prepare special teaching and learning materials?		
--	--	--

(b) Did you have any other support before receiving this student? *(Please tick appropriate box)*

Yes	
No	

If yes, please specify the type of support you had.

--

(d) What was your opinion of the level of the preparation of the support you were able to access? *(Please tick the relevant box).*

Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor

(e) Please detail any other preparation, if any, you have found useful. *(Up to two points).*

1.
2.

4.5 SUPPORT WHEN TEACHING THE PUPIL

(a) What forms of support in the classroom did you receive when teaching this pupil? *(Please tick relevant boxes)*

Full time specialist teacher for visual impairment specifically for this pupil- one to one	
Part time specialist teacher for visual impairment specifically for this pupil- one to one	
Full time specialist teacher for visual impairment for all pupils	
Part time specialist teacher for visual impairment for all pupils	
Full time specialist teacher for hearing impairment specifically for this pupil- one to one	
Part time specialist teacher for hearing impairment specifically for this pupil- one to one	
Full time specialist teacher for hearing impairment for all pupils	
Part time specialist teacher for hearing impairment for all pupils	
Full time specialist teacher for learning disabilities specifically for this pupil- one to one	
Part time specialist teacher for learning disabilities specifically for this pupil- one to one	
Full time specialist teacher for learning disabilities for all pupils	
Part time specialist teacher for learning disabilities for all pupils	
Other professional support in class <i>(please give details)</i>	

(b) Did the pupil receive support outside the class during lessons?

Yes	No

(c) If yes, please state the type of support received by the pupil outside the classroom.

Description of support received outside classroom

(d) What was your opinion of the level of support you were given during teaching time? (*Please tick the relevant box*).

Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor

(e) Please say why you felt that way

--

(d) What further support during teaching time, if any, do you think could have been useful? (Up to two points).

1.
2.

4.6 SUPPORT DURING NON-TEACHING TIME

(a) During non-teaching time, which of the following activities did you carry out in relation to this pupil? Please tick whether you engaged in the activity.

	Activity carried out? (please tick)
Consultation with the Montfort schools for visual impairment, hearing impairment and learning disabilities	
Consultations with specialist teachers for visual impairment, hearing impairment and learning disabilities	

Consultation with the pupil's parents/guardians	
Preparation of materials for the pupils with disabilities	
Other activities concerned with the pupil during non-teaching time (please detail)	

(b) What was your opinion of the level of support you were given during non-teaching time? (Please tick the relevant box)

Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor

(c) Please say why you felt this way (for example, what further support during non-teaching time, if any, do you think could have been useful? Up to two points).

1.
2.

4.7 YOUR WORK LOAD

(a) To what extent do pupils with disabilities create an extra workload for you? (Please tick relevant box)

Significantly	To a minor extent	Not at all

(b) If you think there is an extra workload, please highlight the main nature of this. (Up to two points).

1.
2.

(c) Which of the following do you think would significantly help you with the extra workload associated with special educational needs? (Please tick the two most effective strategies for helping you with workload associated with special educational needs)

Extra classroom support	
Increased allocated time to prepare materials	

Increased allocated time to plan with specialist teachers	
More dialogue with parents	
More opportunities to liaise with outside specialists	
More inset/training in SEN	
Other (please detail)	

4.8 EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS AND HEAD TEACHERS

What are your experiences in teaching pupils with disabilities? (Up to three points).

Positive experiences	Negative experiences
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

(b) What do you think are the experiences of pupils with disabilities? (Up to three points).

Positive experiences	Negative experiences
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

4.9 THE VIEWS OF TEACHERS AND HEAD TEACHERS

(a) Overall, what would you perceive to be advantages of inclusion? (Up to three points).

1.
2.
3.

(b) Overall, what would you consider to be disadvantages of inclusion? (Up to three points).

1.
2.
3.

(c) As stipulated in the international standards, if children with disabilities are given educational opportunities, they can also lead meaningful productive lives and contribute to the economic well being of their families, communities and country (Please tick the appropriate box).

Strongly agree	
Agree	
Don't know	
Strongly disagree	
Disagree	

(d) Please say more about your answer

4.10 BARRIERS TO LEARNING AND PARTICIPATION FACED BY PUPILS WITH DISABILITIES

What, if any, are the main particular barriers to learning and participation faced by girls with disabilities? (Up to three points).

Barriers faced by girls	How these barriers can be addressed
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

What, if any, are the main particular barriers to learning and participation faced by boys with disabilities? (Up to three points).

Barriers faced by boys	How these barriers can be addressed
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Thank you very much for your time and support rendered to completing this questionnaire. Please return the questionnaire to the Head teacher in a sealed envelope provided who will then send all the questionnaires to me.

Appendix 5 for Chapter Seven: Classroom Observation Schedule

EDUCATION OF PUPILS WITH DISABILITIES IN MALAWI'S SECONDARY SCHOOLS: POLICY, PRACTICE AND EXPERIENCES.

THE INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSION POLICY.

The observer/researcher should locate the pupil with disability in the classroom and another one without disability for comparison. The researcher should take field notes against time-line. During the observation, the researcher has to establish whether the teachers' classroom practices were in consistent with the tenets of inclusion such as participation, non-discrimination, and valuing diversity.

Name of secondary
school _____

Name of
pupil _____

Type of
disability _____

Form (Year) _____

No. of pupils _____

No. of pupils with SEN _____

Observer/Researcher _____

Subject _____

Lesson _____

Date _____ Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

TIME-LINE	ACTIVITIES/FIELD NOTES

Appendix 6 for Chapter Eight: Semi-Structured Interview Schedule with Pupils with Disabilities

Education of Pupils with Disabilities in Malawi's Secondary Schools: Policy, Practice and Experiences

I am conducting research on education of pupils with disabilities in Malawi's secondary schools as a requirement for my studies. The research tries to explore the policy through to the practice context and experiences of teachers and pupils with disabilities. The aim of the study is to help influence policy development and practice in order to improve the delivery of inclusive education particularly for pupils with disabilities in conventional secondary schools in Malawi. The interview will take about 20 minutes to complete.

Pupils will narrate their major life themes as pupils with disabilities in Malawi's inclusive secondary schools.

1 Do you know why you were selected to come to this secondary school?

Yes	
No	

2 I know this person who has been selected to come to this secondary school. What does s/he need to know to have a good time and be successful here?

--

3 What are the best things about this secondary school?

--

4 What are the things that are not so good about this secondary school?

--

5 What would you like to change about it?

--

6 Do you have a favourite teacher? What is special about him/her?

--

7 Can you think of a teacher who is not so good? What is 'not so good' about him/her?

--

8 Do you work really hard in school?

Yes	
No	

9 Think of a really good lesson you have had here. What made it really good lesson? Tell me about it.

--

10 Think about a not-so-good lesson that you really did not like. Can you say why you did not like it?

--

11 Can you think of other pupils who are so good to you in this secondary school? What is so good about them?

--

12 Can you think of other pupils who are not so good to you in this secondary school? What is not so good about them?

--

13. What are the barriers to learning and participation faced by pupils with disabilities in secondary schools?

--

14. How can these barriers be addressed to enable pupils with disabilities in Malawi's secondary schools reach their full potential?

--